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A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the

EXISTENCE

OF

GOD.

BY

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[redacted]

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THE Nature of Mankind, conſider'd as Rational Beings, is made up of ſuch Faculties, that they are not only capable of Religion (that is, fitted and qualified to believe that there is a Being vaſtly Superior to them, and to know and worſhip that High Being in ſome agreeable ſort and meaſure); but they are moreover generally inclin'd to Religion, prone to it, and pleas'd with it, as a thing which is ſuitable and correſpondent to their Faculties; ſo that in all Ages, and in all Nations, people have profeſt ſome kind of Religion or other: Nay even Barbarous People,

rather than they would be wanting in Religious Performances, have abounded in great variety of Superſtitions; and before they would be Atheiſts, have been downright Idolaters; adoring a plurality of Gods, rather than they would own no Deity at all; which ſhews that Religion is in ſome ſenſe natural to the Soul of man; and that the Corruption which is in mens Practiſes, proceeds from a defect of Light in their Underſtandings, from thoſe many Ignorances and Errors wherewith they are poſſeſt. Were it not for this, True Religion would be the great Profeſſion of the whole World.

There are eſpecially Three Great Errors which have ſtrangely miſguided and corrupted the minds of ſome men, and conſequently have taken off that power and influence, which otherwiſe Religion would have had over them, even from natural Conſcience: And theſe relate, either to the Being of God, or to his Nature, or to his Government of the World, and Judiciary power over it.

1. Firſt, Some reject all belief of God's Being, or at leaſt queſtion very much the truth of ſuch a Belief; and ſo of courſe conceive Religion to be, not of Divine, but Humane

Humane Inſtitution; a piece of State-Policy, deviſed and ſet up by cunning men, for the better keeping of Human Societies in order and peace. To ſuch men Religion muſt needs ſeem an indifferent matter, not worth their time or pains to concern themſelves much about, nor to care whether this or that mode of Religion be profeſſed, becauſe they look upon all Religion as an Artifice, an Invention that is alterable at pleaſure, as the Reaſons of State, and Civil Policy require.

2. Secondly, Some acknowledge the Being of God, together with the inward Neceſſity, Reaſonableneſs, and Excellency of Religion in general; but yet are much miſtaken as to the particular manner of their Religion, and in their way of worſhipping God; becauſe they are greatly miſtaken in their notions of his Nature. For they apprehend him to be not ſuch as he really is, but ſuch a one as they would have him be; either a very tame and gentle Being, that is eaſily pleas'd with formal Profeſſions of Reſpect; or a very Partial Being, that is kind only to one Sect of People; or an Arbitrary, Auſtere, and Rigid Being, that ſeeketh to hurt, and delighteth in the Miſeries of Mankind. Accordingly, as their Appre-

henſions of God's Nature are, ſo they form and ſuit the Scheme of their Religion towards him; which muſt needs be ſtill as uncouth and improper, as thoſe Principles are falſe, upon which the whole model of their Religious Worſhip ſtands.

3. Thirdly, Some are willing enough to believe the Reality of God's Being, and the glorious Excellence of his Nature; but yet conceive, that he is ſo happy in himſelf, and in the enjoyment of his own Perfections, that he doth not meddle with the Tumultuous Affairs of the Sublunary World, nor takes any notice of the Actions of men; and conſequently, that he will not take men to an account for their Actions another day. And as long as they go upon this Principle, what venerable thoughts ſoever they may have of the Divine Majeſty, it cannot be expected that they ſhould have any great regard for themſelves; but that their Lives will be very diſſolute and irreligious.

Therefore, to retrench theſe Evils, and to ſettle True Religion upon its right bottom, theſe Three things are highly neceſſary to be done.

1. Firſt, To convince men of the Reality of God's Exiſtence; which is the Prime,

Prime, the Fundamental Buſineſs of all Religion; *For he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11. 6. And the thing is ſelf-evident: For all Religion being ſuppoſed to be directed towards God, and to terminate in him, before men can be ſatisfied of the Neceſſity or Uſefulneſs of Religion, they muſt be perſuaded of the Reality of God's Exiſtence.

As that Great Man of a Pagan, *Cicero*, obſerves: *If there be no God, or if God takes no care of Humane Affairs, what Pietty, Sanctity, or Religion can there be? for theſe things relate purely, and properly, and only to the Majeſty of God, upon this Suppoſition, That God takes notice of them; and that God is a Rewarder of Mankind. But if God cannot do us good, or will not do it; if he be not at all concern'd for us, nor obſerves what we do, nor gives us any thing that is of uſe to the Life of men; what encouragement can there be for us to offer Worſhip, Honour, and Prayers unto him?* De Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

2. Secondly, It is neceſſary alſo to give men a right account of thoſe Attributes and Perfections which are the Splendor of God's Nature: Becauſe, as his Nature is the Standard or Rule of all Religious Worſhip that is acceptable to him (for

what is not agreeable to his Nature, can never be grateful to his Mind) ſo is the true knowledge of his Nature the greateſt motive to thoſe Acts of Worſhip which are well-pleaſing to him; (for what can more induce you to adore him with Prayers and Praiſes, with Reverence, Chearfulneſs, and Love, than to be well aſſured, that the Object of your Adoration is a Being infinitely Wiſe, Righteous, Powerful, and Good?)

3. Thirdly, It is neceſſary likewiſe to ſhew the Acts and Ends of God's Providence, as well as to prove his Exiſtence, and to explain his Attributes: That he is no Retired Being, no Careleſs Governour, no Unconcern'd Spectator of Affairs here below; but that he doth diſpoſe, order, and ſuperintend all things now, that at laſt he may judge the World in Righteouſneſs, and may ſhew himſelf a Rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him. For, as this doth excite men to humility, patience, reſignation, ſelf-denial, and to all manner of obedience to God's Will, ſo it naturally ſerves to make them *work out their ſalvation with fear and trembling.*

Theſe Three things being of ſuch apparent Uſe, and of ſuch vaſt Concernment and Importance, I ſhall adventure, by

by God's aſſiſtance and bleſſing, to diſcourſe of them in ſome little meaſure ſuitable to my own poor Abilities; and that in as clear, as ſuccinct, and as practical a manner as I can; though I am ſenſible before-hand what Difficulties muſt occur upon ſo Divine a Subject, and what Time and Labour it muſt coſt to go through ſo great an Undertaking.

At preſent I ſhall enter upon the Conſideration of God's Exiſtence; moſt humbly beſeeching that Father of Lights, of whoſe Eſſence and Perfections I preſume to ſpeak, ſo to illuminate my Underſtanding, and to direct my Heart, that I may not conceive any thing that ſhall in any wiſe detract from the Honour of a Being ſo tranſcendently Great, ſo Glorious, ſo Adorable.

CHAP. I.

IN treating of this Fundamental Point, the Exiſtence of God, I ſhall caſt the Sum of my following Meditations under theſe Principal Heads, as the Boundaries of this whole Diſcourſe.

I. Firſt, It muſt be enquired, what the Notion of God implies and ſignifies; or what is meant by that Appellation.

II. Secondly, It muſt be ſhew'd, that there really is a Supreme and Bleſſed Being, whom we call GOD.

III. And then Thirdly, It muſt be conſider'd, what Practical Inferences may be deduced from this Truth.

I. Firſt, As to the firſt Principal Head, concerning the Notion of God; it is either general, or more particular: Both which being rightly conſider'd, it will evidently appear, what conception or notion we have in our minds, when we think of that Nature, or Being, which is called by the name of God.

1. In general, The notion of God ſignifies a Being which is *eminently* and *abſolutely Perfect*. Though we cannot give a full definition of that Being, becauſe it is impoſſible for our finite and ſcanty Faculties to entertain a conception that is exactly anſwerable and adequate to a Nature ſuppoſed to be Infinite; yet this is an intelligible deſcription of God, and the beſt de-

deſcription we can make for a ſhort one; That God is in the higheſt degree the moſt perfect of all Beings, which either have an exiſtence, or are poſſible to exiſt. How different ſoever the Name of God be in the ſeveral Languages of the World; and how various ſoever thoſe ways have been, whereby people in all Countreys have expreſt their thoughts of God; all men who have believed and ſpoken of a Supreme *Numen*, or Deity, did mean a Nature diſtinct from all other things, and the Beſt, the Nobleſt, the moſt Excellent and Admirable; that is, a moſt Perfect Being.

That I may open this matter throughly, I muſt deſire you to obſerve Two things.

1. Firſt, That the Perfection of a thing is that wherein the worth and excellence of it doth chiefly conſiſt. As, in Inanimate Bodies, the perfection of them is Subſtance, for in that they excel a Shadow. In Vegetables, the perfection of them is Life; for in that they excel Minerals and Stones. In Animals, the perfection of them is Senſe; for in that they excel all Plants, and Trees. And in Men, the perfection of them is Reaſon; for

for in that they excel all Brutes. So that for a thing to be perfect, is to poſſeſs that dignity, and valuableneſs which chiefly belongs to its Nature.

2. You muſt note, That Eminent and Abſolute Perfection conſiſteth in poſſeſſing after a ſingular manner, and in the higheſt degree, all kind of Excellence, without the leaſt mixture of Defect, or Imperfection. Such Defects and Imperfections there are in all Creatures. In all Bodies there is Subſtance; but ſuch as is wrapt up in Matter, which is a great imperfection in compariſon of Spirituality. In all Vegetables there is Life; but ſuch as is ſubject to decay, which in them is imperfection. In all Animals there is Senſe, or Perception; but ſuch as is attended with Fear, Grief, Anger, and other diſquieting Paſſions, which are ſo many Imperfections in their Nature. In Men, there is Reaſon; but ſuch as is blemiſht with Ignorance and Errors; and the knowledge they have, is acquired by the great labours of the Mind, by Contemplation and Study, by cloſe arguing from one thing to another, and by a long train of thoughts, which follow each other ſucceſſively, and are gradually ſpun out of the Soul by the painful operations of the

the Rational Faculties; all which ſhews the Defects and Imperfections that are in Humane Nature alſo. And as for thoſe Bleſſed Spirits above, which we call Angels, though there be in them a perfection of Underſtanding, without dulneſs, pain, or laborious activity; and though there be too rectitude in their Wills, regularity in their Affections, and all moral Perfections which make them happy, yet is their Knowledge limited; and for their whole Being, they depend upon the Will and Pleaſure of a Superior Power, that at firſt created, and ſtill preſerves them; which argues imperfection in them likewiſe, although they be the nobleſt part of the Univerſe. Go through every Claſſis and ſort of Individuals in the World, and you will find in all of them ſome Deficiencies which are annext to their Principal and Beſt Part; ſo that though they be all perfect in their kind, and fit for the Ends for which they were formed, yet they fall vaſtly ſhort of Eminent and Abſolute Perfection: For ſuch Perfection is to have all kinds of Excellence, and all degrees of Excellence, clear and free from all manner of Defect, indigence, or Incapacity.

Now

Now the Notion of God includes this Abſolute Perfection. For that word, *GOD*, ſpeaks a Being that is moſt *Excellent:* So that ſuppoſing a Deity to be, and to be the Cauſe of all Inferior things (which the Notion of God implies too) you muſt neceſſarily conceive of him, as the Being, in whom all thoſe Perfections are united, as in a Center, which are divided every-where in the World; and that they are all in Him in a moſt eminent and excellent Degree. For no Being can give thoſe Perfections which ſome way or other it hath not, either formally or actually, or virtually and eminently in it ſelf; becauſe then it would communicate more than it hath; that is, more than what is in its power to impart; which to ſuppoſe, would be a contradiction. All Cauſes that work by a neceſſity of Nature, though they operate to the utmoſt power and extent of their Faculties, yet 'tis as impoſſible for them to yield what they have not, as it is for Water to bring forth a Rational Soul, or for Fire to produce an Angel out of a few Sticks. And though Voluntary Agents work as they pleaſe, and may give their Effects much leſs than themſelves have; yet 'tis as impoſſible for the Freeſt and Powerful

Powerful Agent to give more, as it is for an Artificer to form a World out of nothing. The thing it ſelf cannot admit of ſuch Omnipotence: And ſo we may be ſure, that neither could God beſtow Perfections which he himſelf was not poſſeſt of; and therefore, thoſe Excellencies which we find in Nature, and which are the Perfections of Nature, muſt be concluded to come from the Author of Nature; and conſequently to be in him, as in their true Original; for otherwiſe there would be more Excellencies in the Effects, than there are in the Cauſe; which is as abſurd to ſuppoſe, as it is to imagine, that there is more Water in a Rivulet, than in the Ocean.

Again; As all Perfection muſt be conceiv'd to be in that Supreme, moſt Excellent, and moſt Glorious Nature, which we call GOD; ſo it muſt be there too Abſolutely, or without the leaſt mixture of Defect. All defect muſt be in the Creature; and that, not ſo much by immediate Cauſality from God, as by the neceſſary Condition of its own Nature; becauſe it is a thing made, and of Temporary production; and therefore of a Finite Nature, and of Limited Faculties; that is, it muſt be eſſentially imperfect; eſpecially

eſpecially in compariſon of its Creator; it being utterly impoſſible for a Narrow, Scanty, New-form'd thing to be commenſurate in all its Perfections to the Maker, who is ſuppoſed to be Independent, Infinite, and All-ſufficient in himſelf. The Nature of the thing made, cannot allow this; and by conſequence it is naturally and neceſſarily defective. Upon which account, though we muſt conclude, that God is a Perfect Being becauſe all Perfections in other things are derived from Him; yet we may not conceive, that he hath any mixture of Deficiency, becauſe the things he hath made are all of them defective in ſome reſpect or other: For thoſe Defects are ſo natural, that the things themſelves could not poſſibly have been made otherwiſe, or without them.

Therefore, as we muſt affirm, That the Perfections which are in the World, are limited and partial, blended and alloy'd with ſomething that is a blemiſh to them; ſo we muſt conceive, that thoſe Originals of them which are in God, are Boundleſs and Full, Eminent and Abſolute: For to think otherwiſe, is to degrade the Author of all Perfections; and in truth, to make the Notion of a Deity inconſiſtent with it ſelf. I have

I have been the more deſirous to clear this matter, That the general Notion of God doth and muſt ſignify a Being which is Eminently and Abſolutely *Perfect*; becauſe it is a very Rational Principle, which may be fairly underſtood, and muſt needs be aſſented to by all that will but hearken to Right Reaſon: And becauſe it is a very uſeful Principle alſo, that will ſoon inable us to draw out of it, by direct conſequence, a more

2. Particular Deſcription of the Deity; which is the Second thing I am to come to; that I may ſhew what kind of Being we are to apprehend God to be, before I go about to prove, that this ſuppos'd moſt Perfect Being doth really and actually Exiſt. For, from this great, and General Notion of God, this Particular Account will follow.

1. Firſt, We muſt conceive of God, that he is an *Independent* Being; not beholding to any Antecedent, Diſtinct, and Foreign Cauſe, for the production of his Nature. For could we (without a contradiction) ſuppoſe a Cauſe *Antecedent* to that, which is thought to be the *Chief* and *Firſt* Cauſe of all things? ſuch a Suppoſition

tion would argue *Imperfection* in the Deity: Becauſe it would make him a Precarious Being, depending upon the Activity and Pleaſure of Another, Superior to him in greatneſs of Power, and before him in Time, and in Exiſtence of Nature.

2. God having all Perfection in himſelf, we muſt conceive of him to be of an *Endleſs Life*. For all decay of Life proceeds from a *defect*, infirmity, or limitation in the Eſſence of the Thing; ſo that without the help of a ſtronger Hand, it cannot for ever hold up, and laſt. And ſince Life is one of thoſe Perfections which we poor ſinful men enjoy, it neceſſarily follows, that, as it muſt be in our Maker, ſo it muſt be in him in a moſt eminent and abſolute degree; that is, utterly void of all poſſibility of ever *ending*.

3. We muſt, from the Abſolute Perfection of God, conceive him to be a Fountain of Life, without any *Beginning* likewiſe. For, whatever had a beginning, muſt be concluded in that reſpect *defective*; becauſe it once wanted, not only thoſe Perfections which Beings enjoy, but even Being it ſelf. And beſides, that which *began*, may *end*, as we ſee all the ſucceſſive Productions of Nature do.

There-

Therefore ſince the Notion of God ſignifies Perfection of all Kinds, and in all degrees, Reaſon will tell you that God muſt have ſuch Perfection of Eſſence, as to be of a boundleſs Life, or be everlaſtſting from everlaſting.

4. The Notion of God's abſolute Perfection neceſſitates us to conclude, that he is a moſt perfect *Subſtance*, or a Being that ſubſiſteth of himſelf by the abſolute fulneſs of his own Nature. Indeed we cannot form an adequate and poſitive Notion of the Divine Subſtance, as neither can we of the Subſtance of our own Souls, though they are the nobleſt Beings of this lower World. For our outward Senſes, which are the great Inſtruments of Knowledge, are perpetually uſed to corporeal and groſs Ideas; and *God being a ſpirit*, John 4. 24. cannot be the Object of any ſuch ſenſation. But yet, we may rationally render him an Object of our Minds; ſuch an Object as our *Minds* are capable of viewing, by abſtracting Matter and Corporeity from our Apprehenſions of him. This Reaſon inforces us to do, becauſe *materiality* is a *defect* in the thing that is made up of it; for as it limits and confines the thing to one particular place at once (which is moſt

unſuitable to the conception of a Being that is ſaid to *fill heaven and earth.* Jer. 23. 24) ſo it makes the thing diviſible, and conſequently ſubject to Diſſolution, which is utterly incompatible with the Perfection of God's Life. Therefore Reaſon compels us to do away theſe Imperfections from our Notions of God, and to conceive of him as a *Spiritual Subſtance*, which I ſhall ſhew hereafter in its proper place, is far from being an irrational Notion, however ſome are pleas'd to reject and deride it.

5. Since the Notion of God implies the excellence of Perfection, we muſt conceive of him, that he is too a *diſcerning* and *underſtanding* Subſtance. For Perception being the excellence of all Animals, whereby they are much more perfect than ſenſeleſs Matter, or inanimate Stocks and Stones; this excellence muſt needs, after the moſt perfect and ſublime manner, be in that moſt exalted Nature, from which all Perfection is ſuppos'd to have been derived. The *Pſalmiſt* appeals to the common Reaſon of Mankind, where he argueth, Pſalm 94. 9, 10. *He that planted the ear, ſhall not he hear? he that formed the eye, ſhall not he ſee?* And ſo, *He that teacheth men knowledge, ſhall not*

not he know? Though Perception is not wrought in God by Impreſſions that affect material Organs, nor is attended with pain and diſturbance, as in Creatures, who are neceſſarily imperfect; yet the Reaſon of the thing ſhews, that he is a Sentient, Percipient Being, an intelligent Nature or *Mind*, that acteth in a way which is ſuitable to the condition of a moſt glorious Being.

6. And hence it follows, That we muſt conceive of God, that he is a moſt *perfect Mind*, or a Being that knows all things, and is conſcious of all things that are poſſible to be known, and that not by ſuch diſcourſe or ſucceſſion of Thoughts and Reaſonings as *imperfect* Beings are fain to uſe; but by *intuitive* Acts, and by a direct immediate view. Though knowledge be a great Perfection in Men and Angels, yet to know things gradually, and by piece-meals, and with a limited apprehenſion, is in the Creature a plain *defect*, and therefore it muſt be abſtracted or remov'd from our Conceptions of God.

7. Again, there is in us all a vigorous principle of Activity, whereby we are able to do thoſe things which our Deſires and Wills incline us to perform in our

Sphere, and as far as this principle of Activity carries us. This alſo is a Perfection; but yet ſuch as is intermingled with defects, becauſe the Execution of our Power is laborious, nay *finite*; innumerable things being utterly impoſſible for the moſt mighty Men upon the Earth to compaſs, though their Wits and Induſtry ſhould be never ſo great, and though all their force were united. Upon this account Reaſon will tell you, that God being a Nature abſolutely *Perfect*, all manner of *Impotence* is to be ſhut out of our Notions of him, becauſe all Impotence is a *defect*, and therefore inconſiſtent with, and repugnant unto the Excellencies of the Deity; and conſequently we muſt conceive him to be fully able to produce and do by the Act of his own free Will, whatever doth not imply a contradiction, or whatever is conceivable and poſſible in it ſelf, and can ſtand well with the other Perfections of his Nature.

8. Further yet; The Notion of God ſignifying a Nature that is eminently and abſolutely *Perfect*, we muſt conceive him to be a *good Being* likewiſe; nay, the beſt of all Beings. By Goodneſs here is meant, that excellent and moſt amiable Diſpoſition of Mind, which ſtill prompts one to

to be Communicative, Kind, Gracious, Compaſſionate, and Benificent. 'Tis the beſt Virtue, that which we may call the Perfection of all Pefections; that which commands Honour and Love from all; that which is the Beauty, the Excellency, the Glory of Humane Nature, and therefore it neceſſarily and eminently belongs to the *beſt* Being, that Divine and moſt Glorious Nature, which all People have ever adored for its tranſcendent Goodneſs. *Love is of God*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *John* 4. 7. He is the overflowing Spring and Fountain of all that Benignity which runs through the World; therefore St. *John* ſpoke like a great Philoſopher, as well as a Divine, in ſaying, ver. 8. *God is love*, that is, a Bleſſed Nature made up of Goodneſs, the Mirror and Perfection of it; for there muſt be in this caſe, much more in the Cauſe than there can be in the Effects, which are of a finite, narrow, and ſlender Capacity, as the faculties of all created Beings are; whence it appears, that the glorious Deity cannot be a ſelfiſh, envious, malevolent, ſpiteful, or cruel Being, becauſe theſe and the like Diſpoſitions of Mind are wretched *Defects*, or *Vices* rather, which belong to the Devils in Hell, and to Devils Incarnate;

carnate; nor, though he be Omnipotent, and perfectly Powerful, can he act like an Arbitrary, Tyrannical Being, void of Compaſſion and Tenderneſs. All this is inconſiſtent with that great Benignity which is neceſſarily included in the Notion of God, whoſe boundleſs Perfections argue him to be a moſt deſirable Good, a moſt adorable and charming Object of our Affections; moſt bountiful, benign, merciful, gracious, long-ſuffering, tender-hearted, ready to beſtow upon all that are capable, the greateſt felicities that 'tis poſſible for us to enjoy or deſire.

9. Once more: From the general Notion of God, that he is a Being abſolutely and eminently *Perfect*, we muſt conceive him to be a God of perfect *Equity* and *Juſtice*, always acting according to the eternal Rules of right Reaſon, and the quality of Things. There are ſome Principles of Righteouſneſs ſo natural to the Soul of Man, that they begin to appear as ſoon as humane common Reaſon begins to work. And theſe are ſuch Perfections in us, as ſet us above the reſt of the Sublunary World, and indeed make us excel one another, ſo that the Righteous is more valuable than his Neighbour,

Neighbour, what difference ſoever may be otherwiſe in their outward Circumſtances and Fortunes. Theſe Principles could not come but from the common Author of our Nature; and their Extraction ſhews him to be moſt *exact* himſelf in the Government and Diſpoſal of his Creatures, in whom all Iniquity is a great *defect*, (to ſay no worſe) becauſe it proceeds either from *want* of due *Knowledge*, or from *want* of honeſt *Intention*; both which are *Imperfections* in our Nature, nay, Reproaches and Scandals to it. Therefore that moſt perfect Nature which preſideth over all, muſt be conceiv'd to be moſt righteous towards all that are under his Care and Power: So that as there is no ground for unreaſonable Fears from his Omnipotence, in regard of his great Goodneſs and *Benignity*; ſo neither is there ſufficient ground for Preſumption from his Benignity, in regard of his great *Juſtice*; becauſe, as he has given us equal *Laws*, ſo he will give upon us very equal *Judgment*, and *render to every man according to his works*, Rom. 2. 6.

The Sum is, if People would rightly underſtand and conſider what the Noti-

on of God imports, they could not but look upon him as the moſt lovely and deſirable Being in the whole World; and inſtead of denying his Exiſtence, would be glad that there is a Being over them ſo tranſcendently Perfect, ſo proper and ſuitable for them in this their imperfect State, that ſuppoſing he did not exiſt, all Mankind (all good Men to be ſure) would have reaſon to wiſh he did.

Therefore, before I entred upon treating of God's Exiſtence, I thought it needful for me by way of Preparation to ſhew, what the word *GOD* meaneth, according to the common Senſe of Mankind: in general, A Being or Nature that is eminently and abſolutely Perfect; and in particular, a Being that is Unmade, Independent, Ever-living; a Spiritual Being, ſubſiſting of Himſelf; diſcerning, underſtanding, and knowing all things; able to do whatſoever is agreeable to his Will and Nature; an inexhauſtible Fountain of Love and Goodneſs; that to communicate his Goodneſs, and to diſplay his Nature, made the Univerſe; and ever ſince the Creation hath govern'd all things, inſpecting the Works of his Hands; providing for the good of the whole

whole World, ordering every thing after the wiſeſt and beſt Manner, taking a more particular care of Mankind, conſulting for our preſent and future Happineſs, giving us Laws, diſpoſing of our Fortunes, exerciſing Diſcipline over us in order to that great End; and throughout the whole Series of his Providence ſhewing himſelf to be an Infinite Mind, that is perfectly Wiſe, Beneficent, Powerful, Merciful, Compaſſionate, Kind, *Righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Pſalm 145. 17.

This is a particular and true, though an imperfect Deſcription of the Deity. I have been the more critical in drawing it, becauſe it is a very rational Deſcription; that which is rationally deduced out of this common Principle, That by God is underſtood a *moſt perfect Being*, and that too which is fairly intelligible by a rational Soul. For every Man underſtands what Knowledge means, what Wiſdom means, what Goodneſs means, what Power, Love, and Righteouſneſs do mean. All theſe intellectual and moral Perfections are very intelligible. No ſooner are they mention'd, but we form a Conception of them in our minds; we apprehend preſently what they ſignify.

When

When they are ſpoken of a *Creature*, we eaſily know what it is to be an underſtanding, wiſe, juſt, and good *Man*. And when we diſcover conſiderable degrees and meaſures of theſe Perfections in any Perſon, the apprehenſion of them doth ſo affect our minds, that we cannot but Admire, Reverence, Eſteem, and Love ſuch a Perſon for the ſake of theſe Perfections; and how then can it be thought impoſſible for us to have in our minds a Conception of a Being that is eminently and abſolutely Perfect in all intellectual and moral Virtues? Why cannot we know what ſuch a Being means? Nay, rather, how is it poſſible for us not to adore, venerate, and love ſuch a Being above all things?

I urge this, becauſe ſome that ſay in their hearts, There is no God, and are willing to believe there is none, or *wiſh* at leaſt there were no Deity, do offer this in favour of their Infidelity, That *there is no Idea of God*; meaning, that as we have not of that ſuppos'd tranſcendent Being, any *material* Repreſentation ſtriking and preſſing upon our outward *Senſes*, ſo neither have we any Conception in our *Minds* anſwerable to ſuch a tranſcendent Being; and hence they fancy

fancy that the Notion of a Deity being *incomprehenſible*, there is no ſuch *thing*; or that thoſe Perfections, which we call the Attributes of God, are no Realities, but honorary Titles beſtowed upon an *imaginary Being*, out of a groundleſs *Fear*.

Now in this they are as weak Logicians and Philoſophers, as they are bad Divines; for they go upon two Principles here, both which are utterly falſe.

1. The firſt is, That we have no Evidence or Knowledge, no Conception or Thought of any thing which doth not fall under the cogniſance of our bodily *Senſes*. For there are many *Truths* in *Philoſophy*, which can have no corporeal Repreſentations to affect the Eye or the Ear, nor that inward ſenſitive Part the Fancy, that is common to Men and to Brute-creatures. Though the Clink and Sound of the *Words* makes an impreſſion upon the Senſe; yet the *verity* of the *Propoſitions* which thoſe Words contain, is quite a different thing, that is, purely *intelligible*; and we know and aſſent to the Propoſitions with an act of the Underſtanding, by means of the Congruity they bear to Principles of *Reaſon*; and therefore

fore none but rational Creatures can find out, and apprehend the truth of them. A Beaſt ſees the Colour of Snow, as well as a Man; but no Beaſt can underſtand the truth of this Propoſition, *Snow is white*; becauſe that is a thing out of its reach, for want of that operation of Reaſon, which makes all Truth intelligible and evident to the Mind.

There are alſo innumerable *Eſſences* in *Nature*, which cannot be the Objects of Senſe, though the outward Forms and Ideas of them are. The inward Nature of them is diſcoverable only by the Sagacity and Activity of the *Mind*, obſerving their Effects and Operations; then arguing from one thing to another, and ſo judging of the Reality and Nature of the Cauſe by its Conſequents. Hereby the Underſtanding penetrates into the *inſide* of things, which Senſe and Fancy can never do; and it finds out, not what a thing *ſeems* to be, but what it is, which is many times a quite different thing from the Fantaſtry and Appearance of it, nor can ever be the direct and immediate Object of Senſe.

To inſtance in one particular: We cannot but perceive in ſome meaſure, what an admirable Being the *Soul* of Man is, if we

we will attentively conſider its Powers and Operations. And yet we cannot have any Perception of it by external Senſation, becauſe we cannot hear or ſee it, or handle it with our Hands, or make any diſcoveries of it by any *other* Senſe, no more than we can Smell or Taſte a ſhadow. Therefore there can be no *ſenſible* Images of it to make impreſſions upon the Organs of Senſation; no external Effluvia's of it, no foreign Idea's, no Repreſentations from without to affect the imagination. No, there muſt be the uſe of pure Cogitation and Reaſon, to find out what the Soul is, and to make that intelligible to us which acteth in us; and this will do it, when all our Senſes can't. We perceive that there is ſomething in us which *thinketh*, for every Man is conſcious of his own Thoughts; therefore the Soul is a *Being*. We perceive that it *works* continually in us, therefore it is a *real* Thing; for it is a certain Principle of Reaſon, That what is not, cannot poſſibly work. We perceive that there is in the Soul, Life and Vigour, Power and Activity, Apprehenſion, Knowledge, and Memory, a faculty of comparing things with things, and of reaſoning and judging upon ſuch compariſon;

pariſon; a Power too of determining what to do, of chuſing and refuſing, of deſiring that which it loves, and of reaching out after that which it deſires; therefore it is a real *exiſting* Being. Thus far we can eaſily go in our Notion of the Soul, without any help of Senſation from abroad. And hence we proceed to perceive, That this Soul of ours is an *incorporeal* Being. For its Operations are *incongruous* to ſtupid *Matter*, too quick and noble for Matter, though you ſuppoſe it to be in Motion. Clay cannot *Cogitate*, nor can any moving Wheel *reaſon*, nor can the moſt ſpirituous Parts of the Blood *philoſophize*, nor can the fineſt Motes that dance in the Sun *conſult* or *deliberate*; nor can that glorious and enlivening Creature, the Sun it ſelf, entertain thoſe *Meditations* which bubble and ſpring out of ones *mind*; nor can all the material parts of the World put together, form thoſe Contrivances, Deſires, and Affections, which are the Operations of every Humane Soul; and to ſuppoſe, as ſome Pretenders to Senſe and Wit do, that all theſe Actions proceed from little reſtleſs Atoms, capering about in the Head, and falling accidentally into various Forms and Contextures, doth argue rather that the

the Brains of ſuch Men are infeſted with *Flies* and *Nits*, than that they underſtand any thing of right *Reaſon* and *Philoſophy*.

I have ſaid this to ſhew, That there are many things which are not Objects of *Senſe*, and yet are *intelligible* Objects of the *Mind*; and therefore that 'tis falſe reaſoning to conclude, That there is no intelligible Notion or Idea of God, becauſe the Divine Nature we call by that Name, is ſuppos'd to be an Immaterial Being, and as ſuch is not to be repreſented to our *Senſes*. A pretence, which though uſed to invalidate the belief of a Deity, might with parity of reaſon be made uſe of to diſprove the Exiſtence of all the Beings in the World, whoſe true Eſſences and Natures are not diſcovered by corporeal, ſenſible Idea's; eſpecially the *Soul* of Man, which is no object of external Senſation; and yet by its Operations and Effects, appears to all underſtanding Men to be a real, cogitative, intellectual, and active Being, diſtinct from Matter, though it be immured in Matter; and then, why may we not conceive and underſtand that *ſupereminent Nature*, which is ſuppos'd to create every Humane Soul, to be a perfectly wiſe, righteous, and good

Being,

Being, realy exiſting, though we do not ſee him with the *Eye?* Eſpecially, ſince we may ſee him in ſome meaſure at ſecond hand in his glorious *Works*. For *he hath not left himſelf without witneſs, in that he doth good, and gives us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs*, Acts 14. 17. So *that the invifible things of him from the creation are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead*, Rom. 1. 20.

2. Another very falſe Principle thoſe odd Men go upon, is this, That ſuppoſing God to be, as we believe a tranſcendent, infinite Being; and ſuppoſing our own intellectual Faculties to be, as we find them, of a finite, narrow Capacity; it is impoſſible for us to *comprehend* God in our minds; and therefore we muſt be uncertain, whether the Notions we have of him be true or falſe, right or wrong. This is in effect to ſay, That becauſe we have not *all* knowledge, therefore we can have *none*; according to which rate of reaſoning they may affirm alſo, that we ſee nothing of the Sun, becauſe we cannot view every ſingle

ſingle Ray, ſo as to comprehend its full Luſtre; and that, becauſe we underſtand not all the Myſteries in Nature, therefore we are quite ignorant, or at leaſt have reaſon to doubt, whether thoſe Ideas and Notions we have, do not utterly deceive us: whereas in theſe caſes the imperfection of our Knowledge proceeds not from any Dubitableneſs or Deluſion in the Nature of the Objects, but from the Weakneſs and Incapacity of our own Faculties. Suppoſing the Exiſtence of a Deity, that is, a Being tranſcendently Perfect; how is it imaginable, that we poor Creatures could poſſibly have full and adequate Conceptions of him, unleſs we could reconcile Contradictions, by making Narrowneſs to anſwer Tranſcendency, or a Finite Thing to be proportionable and commenſurate to an Infinite Being? And yet it would not by any means follow hence, that we have no knowledge of God, or that God is an unintelligible Being, becauſe we cannot comprehend all the Glory of his Nature to the full.

We know in part, as we can, and according to our meaſure, becauſe in this weak, mortal ſtate, the dulneſs and in-

capacity of our Minds will not allow us to know perfectly; and to argue hence, that the Deity is an unconceivable, and ſo (at leaſt) a dubitable Being, when our own Conceptions of him, our intellectual Powers are naturally and neceſſarily narrow, is as if we ſhould conclude that we have no knowledge at all of any thing in the World; nay, that it is very queſtionable, whether there be any ſuch thing as a *World*, becauſe we cannot meaſure all the dimenſions of the Univerſe with our *Span*.

Beſides, we may know as much as is neceſſary and fit for us to underſtand now. For as we are not yet able to ſee God as he is, ſo neither would ſuch a full Viſion be needful and proper for us, were it poſſible to be had here. A great deal ought to be reſerved for a more perfect and exalted State, under the notion of a Reward: It is enough to ſee ſo much of this Life, as will raiſe our longings after a better, and will help us to do thoſe Duties of Religion, which are now required in order to a perfect ſtate; and ſo much we do know, though our knowledge of God be comparatively very dim and ſhort. We have ſuch Notions as ſerve to found and encourage

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the practiſe of Godlineſs, and good Morality, and that is all we are to mind in this World. We very well apprehend, That God is an Omniſcient, Juſt, Powerful, Good, and Gracious Being; and theſe Notions are enough to encourage Men to all manner of Piety and Virtue. Therefore, ſince the knowledge of theſe things is the way to Eternal Life, and ſufficient to anſwer the ends and purpoſes of Religion, it is moſt unreaſonable to object againſt the Idea of God, and to quarrel with it, as a thing unconceivable, becauſe the infinite Vaſtneſs of all his glorious Perfections is not to be comprehended by us fully, eſpecially in this our preſent imperfect ſtate.

To conclude this Conſideration: Whatever ſome pretend againſt the Idea of God, I am apt to think, that they who ſtrive and ſtudy to reject it, have a great deal of it in their own Minds, ſtirring and terrifying them with fearful Suggeſtions. For did they not conceive, that God is privy to their Vices, that he is able to puniſh them, and in Juſtice may; it is hardly imaginable, why they ſhould offer ſuch violence to their own Reaſon, as to force it to argue againſt thoſe No-

tions, that by degrees they may obliterate them, and argue them utterly away, and ſo disbelieve the Exiſtence of an Omniſcient, Powerful, and Juſt Being, that ſeems to them a moſt frightful Object. The Idea of God lies very quiet in a good Conſcience: nay, to a Man of an honeſt Heart, and of a pious Life, it is the moſt comfortable Enjoyment, becauſe it fills his mind with ſuch thoughts as theſe; That there is a glorious Being, who ruleth over all, who obſerves all our Actions, who takes care of ſuch as live Godly, Righteouſly, and Soberly in this World; who orders the Affairs of this Life for their good; who will guide them here by his Counſel, and afterwards will receive them into Glory: All which, and the like Notions, are ſuch a comfortable Idea of God, as no Good man would be without for all the World. Therefore, when Men are tempted to deny God's Exiſtence, the Temptation muſt proceed either from a very wrong Opinion of God, as if he were a Cruel, Miſchievous, Spiteful, Falſe, and Ill-natur'd Being; or (which is more likely) from a very evil Conſcience, which makes God appear to an ill Man a formidable Being, by reaſon of his Omni-

Omniſcience, Righteouſneſs, and Power. 'Tis probable, that the trueſt Cauſe of Atheiſm, is Vice; there being on all hands ſuch variety of powerful Arguments to prove a Deity, as one would think impoſſible for any, but Men of the moſt corrupt Minds, to reſiſt the force of them.

CHAP. II.

2. HAVING thus prepared my way towards the proof of a Deity, by ſhewing, That by the Deity is meant, a Tranſcendent Being, that eminently enjoyeth all the Eſſential, Intellectual, and Moral Perfections, which can poſſibly belong to a Nature which is moſt excellent, and abſolutely free from the leaſt defect; And by ſhewing too, how intelligible, rational, and certain this Notion of God's Nature is, I muſt come now in the next place to make it appear, That there really is ſuch a Divine Nature, or that this moſt perfect Being doth actually exiſt.

Now this naturally follows from the common ſtanding Notion of a Deity, which implies all poſſible Perfection.

For Exiſtence is the ground of all Perfection, the very firſt thing in the order of our Conceptions; becauſe that cannot be ſaid to be perfect, which is not, or which wants a Being; much leſs can we ſuppoſe a Nature to be abſolutely perfect, that is, to be perfectly Wiſe, Good, and Righteous, unleſs we ſuppoſe the Exiſtence of ſuch a Nature.

But leſt an Infidel ſhould ſay, We make Suppoſitions of our own, by deviſing what Notions we pleaſe of a God, and then uſe thoſe Suppoſitions for Arguments, to prove there is a God: Therefore in the proſecution of this Point, I ſhall ſhew, That there is in the World a moſt perfect Nature, which we call God, actually exiſting, by conſidering theſe four things, which ſhall be the general Heads of this Subject:

1. *Firſt*, The Neceſſity of the thing it ſelf.
2. *Secondly*, The univerſal Conſent of Mankind.
3. *Thirdly*, Thoſe extraordinary Occurrences which muſt argue the Being of a Deity.
4. And, *Fourthly*, The admirable State of the World.

1. *Firſt*,

1. *Firſt* then, If we go through the whole Series and Order of Nature, from Effects to Cauſes, and from one Cauſe onward to another, we muſt of neceſſity come at laſt to one firſt Cauſe, to a Being that doth neceſſarily exiſt of it ſelf, and conſequently is a diſtinct, independent, and moſt perfect Being.

Here we muſt take notice of an univerſal Trth, which will very much help to guide our Reaſon, *viz.* That whatever once had not any real Being, could not be the cauſe of it ſelf; for upon that impoſſible Suppoſition, it would have exiſted, and yet not exiſted at the ſame time. It would not have exiſted, becauſe it is ſuppoſed to have wanted a Cauſe for its Production; and it would have exiſted, becauſe it is ſuppoſed to have exerciſed cauſality; which two things being contradictory to each other, it muſt be granted, that whatever once came out of a State of Non-exiſtence, was brought out of it by another diſtinct Agent which exiſted antecedently, and had actual Power over it. Hence it follows, That all the Effects which are now in Nature, and once were not, do owe their Origination to Cauſes which

were before them (for thoſe things which had no being, could not in a ſtate of nothingneſs Act, much leſs could they act upon themſelves); and how many ſoever the Foreign Cauſes of them were, they all lead us up to a Permanent, firſt Cauſe, which depended on no other, nor ſtood in need of another for its being. Now we ſee, that there are innumerable things in the World, which once were not; and the immediate Cauſes of theſe were themſelves the Effects of other Agents; and they again of others, and ſo on, till we gradually aſcend to one Chief Cauſe, which was the Original of them all. To omit all other things at preſent, I inſtance in theſe two ſorts of Effects we ſee daily; the Motion of Bodies; and the Production of Living Creatures, eſpecially of Mankind. Firſt, For the Motion of Bodies.

The principal Parts of the World are never idle. In the Earth there are active Principles of Life and Vegetation, which prepare the vital Juice that is in all Plants and Trees. In Animals there is Concoction, Digeſtion, and a Motion, or Fluor of the Chyle, which ſerves for Nutrition. In the Sea there is a Flux and Reflux, and a Current in Rivers and Springs.

Springs. In the Air there are Viciſſitudes and Turnings, as Exhalations and Vapours ſteam out of the Earth, and return to it again modified into various Forms. And the conſtant circular Courſes of thoſe glorious Bodies in the Firmament, ſhew likewiſe, that in this viſible World there is no Reſt. Now all theſe Motions of material Subſtances muſt depend upon Cauſes; for Matter alone is a liveleſs, unactive, ſtupid Thing, which can no more move it ſelf, than Mountains and Rocks can walk; and whatever thoſe Cauſes be, whether proximate or remote, they muſt depend for their Operations upon the Energy of one ſupreme Cauſe, that impower'd Nature, and ſet the whole Frame of it on work, and gave it, as we may ſay, the firſt Stroke; for otherwiſe, Motion, which once was not in being, would have been the Cauſe of it ſelf, which is utterly impoſſible.

The like may be ſaid of the Production of Living Creatures, and particularly of Mankind. Once we were not, therefore you and I, and all of us had a beginning, as we ſhall have an end; and though we ſhould run up our Generations ſo far, as to date our Breed from

from an hundred thouſand Years ago, yet muſt we of neceſſity derive it at laſt from ſome Anceſtors, who were not begotten of others, as we have been, but were made after a different manner by an Omnipotent Cauſe, which could give them a beginning; for otherwiſe we muſt either run up on to Eternity, or ſuppoſe our firſt Parents to have made themſelves, which is repugnant to the univerſal Truth I demonſtrated before, and would imply, that thoſe our firſt Parents had a Being, and no Being at the ſame inſtant.

This Argument ſo ſtrongly proves the neceſſary Exiſtence of a firſt Cauſe, or a Deity, to form the whole Frame of Nature, and to ſet it in order, that ſome unreaſonable Men find themſelves conſtrained to tell us, that the World ever was, as it is now; the ſame from all Eternity, without any Riſe, Novity, or Beginning; and ſo without any dependence on a firſt Cauſe, or need of it.

They were as good ſay plainly, That they are reſolved never to be convinced, but will rid themſelves of all belief of a Deity at any rate, though they deſtroy the Principles of Common Reaſon, and run

run into the moſt fulſome Abſurdities and Contradictions. For how can it conſiſt with reaſon to take a boundleſs Progreſs from one Effect to another, ſtill onward up to Retro-infinity, without ſtopping at any beginning? This conceit being admitted, theſe monſtrous Abſurdities muſt follow:

1. *Firſt*, It implies the local Motion of Bodies to have produced it ſelf, without the efficiency of a firſt Mover, which is impoſſible, becauſe Motion is neither eſſential to Matter, (for then no body could ever reſt) nor is it incident to Matter as ſuch, but by its being touched by ſome moving Principle that is diſtinct from it. It is a Paſſion impreſt upon Matter by an Agent, by virtue whereof it changeth place and diſtance; and therefore it preſuppoſeth Action from ſomething elſe; otherwiſe it muſt be its own Creature and Maker too, the Effect and Cauſe of it ſelf at the ſame time, and out of nothing, which is a Contradiction. So that though you go through the vaſteſt Series of moving Bodies, from the things below to the Heavens above, you muſt come at laſt to a firſt Mover of all things, or conclude againſt all Senſe

Senſe and Reaſon, that there are innumerable Effects without any Original Efficiency. Suppoſe when the World was made, it had preſently had ſome great Jog given it; 'twere hard to conceive, that the Motion of its ſeveral Parts ſhould not have ſpent it ſelf in a little time, without a conſerving Power pervading through all: But it confounds Humane Underſtanding to think, how there could be Motion all along from all paſt Eternity, and without any beginning, no ſuperior Power moving or acting upon Bodies; becauſe it is impoſſible for Matter to be ſelf-active, though you ſhould ſuppoſe it to have been Eternal. It could no more move than it could make it ſelf; for upon that principle Men muſt return to that great Abſurdity and Contradiction, touching a thing being its own Cauſe; that is, touching its being and not being at the ſame time.

2. *Secondly*, To ſuppoſe the whole World to have been Eternal, would render the Generation of Mankind altogether impoſſible. For every ones Formation and Birth is abſolved in the ſpace of ſo many Months; and ſo it muſt of neceſſity include, not only a Period, but a Beginning too; both which are inconſiſtent

ſiſtent with the Notion of Eternity; for if Humane Race was always begotten, carry it as high as you pleaſe, you muſt come to a moment when Generation did begin.

3. If it be ſaid, *Thirdly*, That Men were not from all Eternity generated, as they are now, but that ſome were created or made from everlaſting, and thence others were produced in the ordinary common way; this contradicteth it ſelf, for it neceſſarily infers a Creator or Maker; and by conſequence it implies a firſt Man, and a firſt Cauſe, and a time when our firſt Anceſtors began; whereas there is neither firſt nor laſt in Succeſſions which are Eternal; ſo that were our Anceſtors Eternal, it muſt be ſaid plainly, we had no firſt Parents at all.

4. And then, *Fourthly*, What can be more abſurd than to conceive, that every particular Man ſhould have (as we ſee every Man hath) a Father and a Mother, and yet that all Mankind ſhould have none?

5. *Fifthly*, Or if every Man's Parents were infinite; then it muſt be ſaid, That there are as many Infinites as there are and have been particular Men in the World,

World, which is ſuch another great Abſurdity as the former.

6. *Sixthly*, To conclude this Argumentation; To affirm the World to have been Eternal, is to deſtroy the Notion of Infinity, and to entangle ones ſelf in the greateſt Nonſenſe. For, (to give you the Words of a moſt Learned and Judicious Writer) "If the World be Eternal, "there muſt have been paſt an *infinite* "Succeſſion of Ages; an infinite number "of Succeſſions are already *paſt*; and if "paſt, then at an end; and ſo we find "an Infinite which hath an end, which "is a conſequence becoming one who "avoids the belief of a Deity, becauſe "Infinity is an unconceivable thing. Be-"ſides, if the number of Generations "hath been Infinite, theſe two conſe-"quences will unavoidably follow, which "the Reaſon of any one, but an Atheiſt "would ſtartle at; That one Infinite may "be greater than another; and that the "part is equal to the whole. For let "him fix where he pleaſe in the Courſe "of Generations, I demand, whether "in the great Grand-father's time the "Succeſſion of Generations was Finite or "Infinite? If Finite, then it had a be-"ginning, and ſo the World not Eter-"nal.

Biſhop Stillingfleet's *Orig. Sac.* p. 376.

" nal. If Infinite, then I ask, Whether " there were not a longer Succeſſion of " Generations in the time of his great " Grand-children; and ſo there muſt be " a number greater than that which was " Infinite; for the former Succeſſion was " Infinite, and this hath more Genera- " tions in it than that had; but if it be " ſaid, That they were equal becauſe both " Infinite; Then the Succeſſion of Gene- " rations to the Grandfather, being but " a part of that which extends to his " Grand-children and Poſterity, the part " is equal to the whole.

This ſurely is enough to ſhew, That according to common Reaſon the World once was not, but that it muſt have had a beginning; and conſequently, that there was a firſt Cauſe of it; nay, that the Exiſtence of an higher Being was neceſſary to make it, becauſe whatever once was not, could not be ſelf-originated; all that now Moves or Lives in the World could not produce or make it ſelf, but was brought into being by a moſt perfect Nature that was before it, and ſuperior to it, that is, by a Deity, and by nothing leſs than a Deity, for theſe five Reaſons.

1. *Firſt,*

1. *Firſt*, It was impoſſible for all Beings to be made; for that would ſuppoſe that once there was nothing at all; and then 'tis confeſt on all hands, that nothing could have been produced. Therefore as it was neceſſary for the firſt Cauſe to be independent on any other, (for elſe it could not have been the firſt) ſo it was neceſſary for that Cauſe to be unproduced, by reaſon of the abſolute Perfection, and intrinſick plenitude of its own Eſſence, ſo that it needed no hand from without to give it any thing.

2. *Secondly*, The firſt Cauſe having its being by neceſſity of Nature, it was impoſſible for it to have any beginning. For, had it had a beginning like other things, it muſt have taken it from ſome other Principle, becauſe whatever once wanted Origination, could not give it to it ſelf; and conſequently the Exiſtence of the firſt Cauſe muſt have been contingent and precarious, which would have deſtroyed the great Prerogative of its independence.

3. *Thirdly*, Conſidering that the ſeveral parts of the World were to take their Original out of a State of Non-exiſtence, it was

was impoſſible for the firſt Cauſe to have a Power limited and reſtrained by any thing *without* it. For as nothing could hinder it from being, by reaſon of its own neceſſary Exiſtence; ſo nothing could hinder it from acting, by reaſon of its abſolute Independence; and conſequently, the Firſt Cauſe had neceſſarily a Power of creating things out of nothing; becauſe if any preexiſtent Matter had been requiſite for it to work on, it muſt have depended upon Matter, and been beholding to Matter for permitting it to act.

4. *Fourthly*, The Power of creating things being ſo neceſſarily great, it was impoſſible for the Firſt Cauſe to be made up of Matter: For all Matter, as ſuch, is an unactive, ſtupid, dead thing, utterly uncapable of producing either it ſelf, or any other Being, much leſs could it act with that wonderful Fæcundity, Counſel, Wiſdom, and Benignity of Mind, which the whole frame of Nature argues to be in the Firſt Cauſe; as ſhall be ſhow'd in its due place.

5. *Fifthly*, It was impoſſible alſo for the Firſt Cauſe of all things to be locally extended, or to be circumſcribed, limited, determined, and confined to Place, as Matter or Body is. For being to raiſe up

a vaſt Univerſe, it was neceſſary for that moſt powerful Nature to be undividedly preſent to every part of the world which it acted upon; and for the Management and Conſervation of the Univerſe, to contain it all within the Immenſity of its own Eſſence: Which Eſſence was neceſſarily boundleſs and unlimited, becauſe it was not poſſible to be produced by any other Being that could reſtrain, define, or bound its Immenſity. For (as an excellent Writer well obſerves and argues) that which limits Beings, is only the Will or Power of their Cauſes, which either would not, or could not beſtow any further Being or Perfection upon them; and therefore only ſuch things as have a Cauſe, are limited, becauſe they being produced out of nothing, are only ſo far and no farther brought into Being, as their Cauſe was willing or able to bring them. That therefore which exiſts of its ſelf without any Cauſe of its Being, muſt alſo exiſt of it ſelf without any Limits of its Being, by reaſon that it was neither limited by it ſelf, nor by any other Cauſe; and that which hath nothing to limit it, muſt neceſſarily be immenſe and boundleſs. God therefore being this ſelf-exiſtent Being, muſt neceſſarily be of an unlimited Eſſence,

Dr. Scot's Chriſtian Life, part 2. vol. 1. p. 193.

Eſſence, an Eſſence which no poſſible Space can either circumſcribe or define, but muſt neceſſarily be diffuſed all through, circumfuſed all about, and preſent with all things.

The Exiſtence then of ſuch a perfect tranſcendent Being as hath been deſcribed, was abſolutely neceſſary in order to the production and formation of the world. And hence we rationally affirm, That before ever the Earth and the Heavens were made, there was an Intellectual Nature that was to be the Cauſe of the whole World; and that this Nature or Firſt Being was and is Self-originated, Eternal, Omnipotent, Incorporeal, and Infinite. In uſing which expreſſions we ſpeak like men, as we are able, according to our Capacities, and as the narrowneſs of our Faculties, compared with the tranſcendency of the Object will allow us. Our meaning more at large is this: Conſidering that all the parts of the world were made by an Efficient Cauſe, and that nothing could bring it ſelf out of Non-exiſtence into Being, by reaſon that nothing could be before it ſelf, we muſt neceſſarily acknowledge, That there is a Firſt Cauſe of all things, and that this Firſt Cauſe was not made or produc'd by

any other: Which Firſt Cauſe being altogether Independent, exiſted by the abſolute Neceſſity of its Nature, by its own Perfection, Permanency, and Fulneſs; and conſequently, was Eternal, or of Infinite Duration; becauſe being unproduced, it could not but be without any beginning. And this Self-Exiſtence includes Self-Activity, ſuitable to the Perfections of an Eternal Nature; that is, a Power of producing and effecting whatever is poſſible in the Nature of the thing, and doth not imply a Contradiction. For all Impotence or Inability to operate, is utterly inconſiſtent with the Perfections of a Firſt Cauſe, from which is derived all the Power that is in Second Cauſes. Whence it follows, That the Firſt Cauſe could not be Matter (a thing which of it ſelf cannot live or move) but a Spirit, void of all Corporeal Subſtance; an Eternal Mind, able perfectly to exert and diſplay its Power, as it becometh an Intellectual, Wiſe, and Voluntary Agent. And laſtly, This Incorporeity renders the Firſt Cauſe uncapable of beind diviſible, or determinable to Place, after the manner of Bodies, which conſiſt of Magnitude and Dimenſions: And therefore how incomprehenſible ſoever the Notion of Infinity may

may ſeem to us, whoſe outward Senſes are uſed only to things corporeal, Reaſon will oblige us to think, that every Being muſt be extended or unextended, limited or unlimited, circumſcrib'd or diffuſed, according as its Eſſence and Nature is; and that the firſt Cauſe being incorporeal, and having once an Immenſe World to make, and ever ſince an Immenſe World to act upon and in, cannot be confined to place, but muſt be every where, and undividedly, in a manner agreeable to the Plenitude of its Nature.

Now this Account of the neceſſary Exiſtence and Condition of a firſt Cauſe, is ſo far a plain deſcription of the Deity, or of God. And it is for the greateſt reaſons that we maintain, that in order to the Production and Framing of this huge Univerſe, the Exiſtence of God was neceſſary, that is, the Exiſtence of an Independent, Self-exiſtent, Eternal, Allpowerful, Immaterial, and Infinite Being. Theſe are not bare Epithets of Honour, beſtowed (as ſome ſtrange Men conceive) upon an imaginary ſomething, which the fancies and fears of People have without reaſon repreſented to their Minds; but real, ſolid, ſevere,

and demonſtrable Truths; ſo that admitting the common and moſt rational Principle touching the neceſſity of a Firſt Cauſe, thoſe glorious Perfections I have now mentioned, muſt neceſſarily belong to it; and becauſe thoſe Perfections are eſſential and peculiar to that Glorious Being we call God; therefore God, and God alone muſt be acknowledged the Firſt Cauſe of all things; and by natural conſequence, the Exiſtence of God muſt neceſſarily be believed.

CHAP. III.

HAVING proved the Truth and Reality of God's being, from the neceſſary Exiſtence of a firſt Independent Cauſe. I proceed now to the ſecond General Head of this Diſcourſe, touching the Conſent of all Mankind; for if it can be made appear, That the belief of a Deity hath been univerſally received in the World, 'tis reaſonable to conclude, that that belief reſulted from a common Principle of Nature, which could not deceive the Minds of all Mankind.

Here

Here then theſe two things are to be ſhew'd:

1. *Firſt*, That Men have univerſally agreed in this, That there is a God.
2. *Secondly*, That this univerſal Agreement is a very ſtrong Argument of God's Exiſtence.

1. *Firſt*, That Men have univerſally agreed in this, That there is a God. That noble Orator and Philoſopher, *Cicero*, doth in ſeveral places acknowledge, That all manner of People were naturally poſſeſt with ſome Anticipations (or Preconceptions) of a Deity, ſo that no Nation was ever ſo wild and undiſciplin'd, but that they had a fear of God, and owned his Being, however they were miſtaken as to the quality of his Nature. To the ſame purpoſe *Seneca* tells, That the belief of a God is planted in every ones mind. And *Maximus Tyrius* is poſitive, That how great ſoever the Contentions of Men were about other Points, they all agreed in this, that there is one Supreme God over all. Nay, *Epicurus* himſelf (of whom this Character is given, that in words he owned the Exiſtence of God, but in fact denied it) was

De Nat. Deor. lib. 1. Tuſc. Qu. lib. 1. de Leg. lib. 1.

Ep. 117.

Diſſ. 1.

Cic. de Nat. deor. lib. 1.

was contented the belief of it ſhould paſs abroad, becauſe it was a kind of innate Principle, not only among Philoſophers, but among the Unlearned too, who all had ſome Pri-notion of a Deity.

So true is this, That not only the real Exiſtence, but even the Singularity and Unity of a Supreme God, hath been generally believed by Heathens themſelves; eſpecially by the wiſer ſort of them; which I think very material for me to take notice of here, for the further Illuſtration and Confirmation of the Matter in hand.

Indeed the Heathens have been wont to worſhip a Plurality of Deities. But withal it is very obſervable, that they look'd upon thoſe many Deities, as a ſort of middle Beings between Mon and the Supreme Deity; and accordingly in their Devotions they addreſſed themſelves to them, as Agents and Officers under the Great God, as his Miniſters of State, and as Mediators between them and the moſt high Sovereign *Numen*, becauſe they thought it irreligious Confidence to apply themſelves to him immediately, and directly; ſuch a venerable and auguſt Opinion they had of the God over all.

Though

Though in the Poetical, Fabulous Ages of the World, ignorant People were taught to worſhip a multitude of gods; as the Souls of dead Men, whom they believed to be Deified; the Sun, Moon, and Stars, which were ſuppos'd to be animated with Deities; beſides, a great number of Dæmons, or incorporeal Subſtances, or Spirits, which they thought were generated, and had the Adminiſtration and Government of the World committed to them; yet they owned One Sovereign *Numen*, One Incomprehenſible, Self-exiſtent Being, the Prince and Father of all. Nay, the more intelligent ſort of Pagans anciently thought, that the Plurality of Deities which the Vulgar worſhipped, were only ſo many ſeveral Names of one and the ſame Supreme God, according to the ſeveral Manifeſtations of his Power. In the Heavens (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) they called him *Jupiter*; in the Air, *Juno*; in the Sea, *Neptune*; in the Earth, *Pluto*; and very many more Appellations there were; which though the ſottiſh Rabble believed to have been proper Names for diſtinct Deities, yet the Philoſophers thought they did all belong to one Supreme *Numen* variouſly acting and diſplaying his Virtue.

De Civit. l. 4. c. 11.

Virtue. And with this agrees that of *Seneca*; What elſe is Nature (ſaith he) but God; or Divine Wiſdom and Power diſplaying it ſelf in the whole world, and in all the parts of it? You may, when you pleaſe, give ſeveral Titles to the Author of all things: And you may call him *Jupiter Optimus Maximus*, and *Tonans*, and *Stator*, not from ſtopping the *Roman* Army in their flight, but becauſe all things do ſtand (or conſiſt) by him. You may well apply to him what Names you will, that ſignify his Heavenly Power and Efficacy: There may be as many Appellations, as there are Gifts, or Effects of God. Beſides *Jupiter*, *Tonans*, and *Stator*, we call him *Liber Pater*, *Hercules*, and *Mercurius*. *Liber Pater*, becauſe he hath produced all things: *Hercules*, becauſe his Power is invincible; and *Mercury*, by reaſon of his Wiſdom. Turn you which way you pleaſe, God meets you; for nothing is without him: He filleth all his Works (ſo that his various Names were according to the various Manifeſtations of him). Should you receive a kindneſs from *Seneca*, and ſay you owed it to *Annæus*, or *Lucius*, you would not change the Perſon, but his Name; for what Name ſoever you call

De Benef. l. 4. c. 7.

call him by, you mean ſtill the ſame man. And ſo you may call the Deity too, Nature, Fate, and Fortune; but all theſe are the Names of one and the ſame God, diverſly uſing and ſhewing his Power.

Hence it appears, That in times of the greateſt Ignorance, Heathens themſelves did not only profeſs the belief of a Deity, but did own alſo the Exiſtence of One Sovereign Being over all. Though they talkt of Gods many, and of Goddeſſes many, and a multitude of Deities was believ'd and worſhipp'd by the Common People; yet the Wiſe men among them lookt upon this great appearance and ſhew of diſtinct Deities, to have been different Names of One Supreme God; various Repreſentations, Characters and Titles of One Eternal and Incomprehenſible Nature pervading through the whole world, and variouſly acting, exhibiting, and manifeſting its Divine Power in it every where.

In the Primitive Ages of Chriſtianity, the Controverſy between the Chriſtians and Pagans was not about the Being of One Supreme God (for all on each hand were agreed as to that) but about the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt, and about many

Inferior

Inferior Powers which the Heathens worſhipp'd beſides the great Creator himſelf, God bleſſed for evermore. 'Tis plain from *Acts* 17. 23, 24. that in St. *Paul's* time the *Athenians* not only own'd the Exiſtence, but adored the Majeſty of the True God; *For*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *whom ye ignorantly worſhip, him declare I unto you*; and that was no other, but the God who made the world, and all things in it; called by the *Athenians*, *the unknown God*, becauſe his Nature cannot be comprehended or ſeen by men. In the following times of Chriſtiany, the great Doctors of the Church, who defended our Religion againſt Heatheniſm, do tell us over and over, That the Pagans acknowledged a Supreme God, as well as Chriſtians. The Diſpute between them was concerning Fictitious Deities ſuppos'd to be ſubordinate to the Supreme. For the Pagans Faith was, that many Gods were derived from One; that to thoſe Inferiour Spirits the care and government of the Univerſe was committed; and that Divine Honours ought to be given them, as the Officers of God, and as Mediators between God and Men. Nevertheleſs, among their many Deities, and over all their many Deities, they acknow-

acknowledg'd One Supreme. They called him the Firſt, the Greateſt, the Unmade, the Supercœleſtial God, the Chief, the King of all. They believed that all things were from him; that he was the Maker eſpecially of Immortal Beings; that he is Incomprehenſible, Good, the common Father of all, wanting nothing, and without all manner of Envy; that he is a Self-exiſtent Principle, the Fountain of all Good, the Conſerver of all things living, the Lord of the Univerſe, the Univerſal Reaſon and Mind, the Uniform Cauſe of all things, the Original of all Pulchritude and Perfection, of all Unity and Power; the Great and Magnificent Father of Nature, whoſe Virtues are diffuſed throughout the whole World. *Julian*, that great Zealot for Heatheniſm, confeſt, that there is a natural knowledge of God in mens minds, from whence that common Inclination towards a Deity ſprings, and that Perſuaſion among all men, that He who is the King over all, hath his Throne in Heaven. Accordingly, *Julian*, and the reſt of the Learned Heathens, honoured the God of Heaven with the greateſt veneration that was poſſible for men of their Principles. Though they gave their Cyril. *l.* 2.

their other Deities divine honours, yet it was an inferior ſort of worſhip; and that they paid too for the Supreme God's ſake, and in honour to him, believing that the Great God was pleas'd with it, becauſe it was given upon his account to other things, as the Miniſters, Images, and Repreſentatives of the Inviſible Deity. If (ſaith *Celſus*, that Bigotted Defender of Paganiſm) a man be required to praiſe the *Sun*, or *Minerva*, he may ſing Hymns chearfully; for by ſinging Hymns to theſe, he will the better worſhip the Great God; becauſe that Divine Worſhip is the moſt perfect, which paſſes through all. However, ſaith he, God is by no means at any time to be forſaken, or left out; neither by day, nor by night; neither in private, nor in publick; neither in any of our Thoughts, nor in any of our Actions, but in every thing our minds ſhould be ſtill directed towards God, and intent upon him. And again; all Torments are rather to be endured, and any Deaths are rather to be undergone, than we ſhould either ſpeak an irreligious thing of God, or admit into our minds an irreligious Thought of him.

Orig. *cont.* Celſus, *p.* 421, & 419.

Before

Before I paſs from this Conſideration, touching the Pagans Belief of the Exiſtence of God, in the Primitive Times of Chriſtianity, as in the Ages before; I cannot but obſerve, by way of digreſſion, that notwithſtanding this their hearty Belief, and Religious Worſhip of One Supreme Deity, the True God, that made all things, theſe Pagans were Idolaters, and were ſtill counted by the Chriſtian Church guilty of Idolatry: Not becauſe they worſhipped Creatures, laying the Creator aſide (for 'tis plain, that they owned and adored the ſame Great God that we Chriſtians worſhip); but becauſe they *ſerved the creature*, παρὰ τὴν κτίσαντα, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Rom.* 1. 25. that is, *beſides the Creator.* They gave Divine Honours to him, and to other Beings too; they worſhipt them as well as the Great God; they made them Partners and Sharers with the Great God in their Religious Services; and though this worſhipping of other Beings was for the Great God's ſake, though it was a lower kind of Worſhip, and though all the Services of the Heathens (eſpecially the wiſer ſort of them) were directed to the Great God, did refer to the Great God, and did terminate in him; yet

yet were they downright Idolaters. And as this ſhews the true Notion and Nature of Idolatry, that it is the *Religious Worſhipping of any thing beſides God:* So it ſhews how impoſſible it is for thoſe Chriſtians, who adore Saints and Angels, as well as the True God, and the True Meſſiah, to clear themſelves of the Charge of Idolatry, notwithſtanding all their nice diſtinctions of *Dulia*, *Latria*, Relative Worſhip, and the like. All this the Heathens might have ſaid for their Excuſe. They gave the Supreme God the higheſt Honours; and in Honour to him they worſhipp'd inferior Deities, as the *Romaniſts* do Saints and Angels: in which reſpect their practice is a plain, but ſhameful Counter-part of old Heatheniſm; ſo that were there no ſuch thing in the Church of *Rome* as Image-worſhip, I cannot ſee but this Creature-worſhip would be enough to make them guilty of Idolatry. Either this practice is Idolatrous, or that of the Heathens was not ſuch, which yet they of the Church of *Rome* dare not affirm.

But to return to the Matter in hand. If from thoſe elder times of Heatheniſm we come down now to modern Ages, though

though we ſearch into the darkeſt and remoteſt Corners of the World, we cannot find any one Nation or People ſo barbarous, ſo ſunk into a State of Ignorance and Stupidity, as not to have believed the Exiſtence of God, even in their Idolatrous Gentile Condition. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work. There is no ſpeech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their ſound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world,* Pſalm 19. 1, 3, 4. Where *David* repreſents thoſe glorious Creatures as proclaiming, and all Nations as hearing them proclaim the Tranſcendent Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, and Majeſty of their Maker and Conſerver. All People, how ignorant ſoever they have been of other Languages, have underſtood this. However they have differed from one another in their Polity, Laws, Cuſtoms, or Manner of Life, have unanimouſly conſented in this, That there is a God. And though many have lived, as if they were without God in the World, yet none have been without him in their Conſciences.

Here falls in an Account which hath been given us, by a moſt Inquiſitive and Learned Writer of our Church; and which, both for the Uſefulneſs and Curioſity of it, well deſerves to be taken notice of in this place. That Great Man undertaking to prove, That men may be guilty of Idolatry, though they believe and worſhip the True God, ſhews particularly, That the groſſeſt Idolaters of later times, both in the Eaſt and Weſt Parts of the World, have acknowledged one Sovereign Being over all thoſe inferior Deities they worſhipp'd; that they gave him the higheſt Honours; and that that they called him in their reſpective Languages by ſome peculiar Name, which ſignified the greateſt Excellency.

Biſhop Stillingfleet's *Defence of his Diſcourſe concerning Idolatry.*

Firſt, he ſhews of the Idolaters of the *Eaſt-Indies*, That they all believed there was but One God who made the World, and reigns in Heaven; and that they worſhipp'd this One God, as well as Chriſtians, and referred all the Honour to him, which they gave to other things; that ſome called the Supreme God *Parabrama*, which in their Language ſignifies, abſolutely Perfect, being the Fountain of all things, exiſting from himſelf, and

and free from all Compoſition; that others call'd that Sovereign Being *Achar*, that is, Immutable; others, *Tento*, believing him to be the Governor of the World; others *Sciaxeti*, or *Scianti*, which ſignifies the Supreme Monarch; and *Tienciu*, which is as much as to ſay, *The Lord of Heaven.*

Then the Learned Author gives this Account of the Idolatrous *Tartars*, That they believed and worſhipp'd One God, owning him to be the Maker of all things viſible and inviſible, and to be the Author of all worldly Good and Puniſhment.

Of the Inhabitants of *Madagaſcar*, he ſhews, That they believed One God, who made Heaven and Earth, and will one day puniſh the bad, and reward the good Actions of men.

Of the People of *Monomotapa*, That they acknowledge One God, whom they call *Mozimo*, and are ſaid to worſhip nothing elſe beſides him.

Of the Idolatrous *Muſcovites*, That they worſhipp'd only the Creator of the Univerſe, to whom they offer'd the firſt Fruits of all things, even their Meat and Drink.

Of the Idolaters of *Cranganor*, That they worſhipp'd the God of Heaven, calling him *Tambram*, and believing him to have made the World.

Of the *Northern* Idolaters, eſpecially the *Goths*, he ſhews, That the moſt ancient of their gods was called by them *Alfader*, that is, the Father of all; they believ'd that this God lives for ever; that he governs all things; that he made the Heavens, and Earth, and Air, and all Things in them; and which is the greateſt of all, that he made Man, and gave him a Soul that ſhould live for ever, although the Body be deſtroyed; and that thoſe who are good ſhall be with him.

Touching the Idolaters in *Africk*, that Excellent Writer ſhews, That they worſhipped God under the Name of *Guighimo*, that is, *The Lord of Heaven*; and that though the Negroes adored many gods, yet they acknowledged One Supreme, whom they called *Feriſſo*, and believed him to be the Author of the Good and Evil they received.

As for the account he gives out of *Joſephus Acoſta*, and *Garcilaſſo de la Vega*, touching the Idolaters in *America* before their Converſion to Chriſtianity, I have reſerved

reſerved it to the laſt, becauſe it ſeems ſo clear and full, that it is the fitteſt Obſervation to conclude this Point. The ſum of it is, That thoſe Idolatrous *Indians* acknowledged a Supreme Lord and Author of all things, whom they of *Peru* called *Pachacamac*, that is, the Soul of the World, the true Sovereign Creator of the World; and *Uſapu*, which is Admirable; and ſuch like; and though they had a great Veneration for the *Sun* and *Moon*, and other things, yet they held and adored *Pachamac* as the chiefeſt of all, and whenever they mentioned his Name, did it with all the Reverence and Devotion imaginable, in Honour to the unexpreſſible Majeſty of God. And hence was that Obſervation of the *Spaniſh* Jeſuit, *Acoſta*, That thoſe who at that time did Preach the Goſpel to the *Indians*, found no great difficulty to perſwade them that there is a High God and Lord over all, and that this was the Chriſtians God, and the True God. This (ſaith he) is a truth conformable to Reaſon, That there is a Sovereign Lord and King of Heaven, and him the *Gentiles*, with all their Infidelities and Idolatries have not denied; ſo that the Preachers of the Goſpel had no great

difficulty to plant and perſwade this Truth of the Supreme God, though the Nations to whom they preached were never ſo Barbarous and Brutiſh. The hard thing was to root out of their minds this Perſwaſion, That there is no other God, nor any other Deity than one; and that all other things of themſelves have no Power, Being, nor working proper to themſelves, but what the Great and only Lord doth give and impart to them. However People have been miſtaken in their belief of a multiplicity of Deities, this hath been a common Notion in all barbarous Countries, that there is One Supreme God infinitely Good.

I think no more need be ſaid, to ſhew the univerſal Perſwaſion of Mankind concerning God's Exiſtence. However, before I proceed to Argue and Reaſon from it, and to prove the Truth of God's Exiſtence from this univerſal Perſwaſion, it will be neceſſary to take notice of two Pretences, which are commonly uſed to evade the force of this Argument.

1. The *firſt* is, That ſome whole Nations have been found, which have been without

without all Senſe of God; as was reported particularly of ſome People in *America*, after the diſcovery of them by Chriſtians. To this there are three things in anſwer.

Firſt, That the matter alledged is not evident or certain, becauſe the Men who firſt related it, were Strangers to the Language and Cuſtoms of thoſe People, and therefore could not be competent Judges of their Principles. Nay, they were abhorred as Enemies, and conſequently were uncapable of underſtanding the Myſteries of thoſe Peoples Religion; a thing, which Men are generally very ſhy of diſcovering, eſpecially to thoſe who uſe them hardly.

Secondly, It is ſo far from being certain, that in probability 'tis not true: For though upon the firſt diſcovery of thoſe Nations, ſome of them were ſuſpected of Atheiſm, yet a different Account was given afterwards upon further enquiries; nay, the moſt Ignorant and Savage People among them did worſhip ſome things after a Religious ſort; however they were miſtaken in their Notions of God's Nature, and as to the manner of his Worſhip; a plain Sign that they thought that there was a Superior Be-

ing to be worſhipped, and that it was better to Worſhip almoſt any thing for a Deity, than not to own any Deity at all.

Thirdly, Were the Report true and unqueſtionable, all that can be gathered hence, is, that 'tis poſſible for ſome Men to be ſo beſotted, and govern'd by outward Senſe, as to loſe in a manner that which is proper to Humane Nature, Reaſon and Religion, and to fall into a Belluine kind of Life. But this is no Argument againſt the common Principles of all the reſt of Mankind, who have hearkned to the Voice of Nature, and to their own Conſciences; nor is it reaſonable, that one particular Exception ſhould prevail againſt a general Rule. If in the Univerſe there be now and then a little Irregularity, it cannot argue that Nature is not ſteddy and uniform. And ſo, if among Mankind there chance to be here or there ſome brutiſh People, it cannot argue, that the generality of Men have no Reaſon, or that what is agreeable to common Reaſon, is falſe. That there is a God, is a Principle agreed upon by the generality of Mankind; and if ſome odd Folks of loſt underſtanding have no ſuch Notion, Of what

what weight is this, that it ſhould bear down the common Sentiment of Mankind? After this rate it may be ſaid, That there is no right Reaſon in the World, nor any Credit or Authority to be given to Reaſon, becauſe there are in the World Beaſts and Naturals.

2. But to take off this Anſwer, it is pretended, *Secondly*, That Philoſophers and Men of Reaſon have been againſt the belief of God's Exiſtence, as *Theodorus*, *Bion*, *Leucippus*, *Democritus*, *Protagorus*, *Diagoras*, *Epicurus*, and the like. Now as to this, theſe four things are to be ſaid.

Firſt, That we ſcarcely find the Names of twelve Atheiſts expreſly mention'd in Hiſtory ſince the Creation; ſetting aſide ſome in theſe later Ages, who would have been thought wiſer than all the World beſides. In all the Scripture we read not of one by Name; and though the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks indefinitely of a Fool in his time, *That ſaid in his heart, There is no God*, Pſalm 14. 1. yet by his Character you ſee what he was counted; and as great a Fool as he was he would not ſpeak out, nor affirm it poſitively, but ſaid it in his heart; ſo that it was rather his Wiſh than Opinion. *Secondly*,

Secondly, Of thoſe we read of in Humane Writers, ſome were called Atheiſts merely becauſe they deſpiſed the Rabble of Deities, and the unreaſonable Superſtitions, which the generality of *Gentiles* had in great admiration. Such was the humour of people in thoſe times, that they ſtigmatiz'd all who oppos'd their follies with that infamous Character: An humour which held on to the times of the Goſpel, when the moſt Religious Diſciples of Chriſt were charged with Atheiſm for the ſame reaſon; becauſe they were Enemies too (though upon far better grounds) to the Faith and Worſhip of the Pagan Deities: So that upon a ſtrict computation, I think, the notorious Atheiſts in thoſe dark Ages were not in all above Seven.

And of thoſe it is obſervable, *Thirdly*, That not ſo much as one could be a tolerable Judge of matters relating to Religion. For ſome of them were infamous for Vice and Immoralities; and therefore in favour to their Luſts did think themſelves concern'd to deſtroy the belief of God's Exiſtence. Others were men of ſo little Senſe, that every Modern Infidel has juſt reaſon to be aſham'd

aſham'd of them: For *Protagoras* was a Porter, and *Diagoras* a Slave; both of them were angry at Providence for not having diſpos'd of them better in the World; and ſo were eaſily bribed and hired by *Democritus* to make up a ſmall paltry Litter. And of all of them it is remark'd, that they were bloated up with Pride, Arrogance, and Ambition, whereby they affected to be ſingular, and to ſignalize themſelves as the moſt knowing Sages in the World, by rejecting Notions which were the common received Principles among all Mankind.

And yet, *Fourthly*, What thoſe few Upſtarts did, they did by ſtraining and forcing their own Conſciences. There is a Power in Conſcience which cannot be utterly ſubdued, eſpecially when not only the Honour, but the very Being of God is concern'd, whoſe Deputy it is. Then Conſcience will throb and poſſeſs the moſt Irreligious men with ſuch Fears as argue the Exiſtence of God, whatever Arguments they endeavour to raiſe againſt him. They lye (ſaith *Seneca*) who profeſs an unbelief of God: For though they maintain it before you in the Day-time, yet at night

Night they themſelves call their Infidelity in queſtion. Company, Buſineſs, or Diverſion, may baniſh their Fears for a while; but thoſe Fears return in the dark from under the Pillow, when Conſcience comes to have private Audience. And to this purpoſe *Colla* in *Cicero* tells us of *Epicurus* himſelf (whoſe Doctrines were deſigned to deſtroy the apprehenſions of a Deity), That he never ſaw any man more afraid than that Philoſopher was of thoſe things which he ſaid were not to be dreaded; that is, Death, and God: A clear Argument, That whatever he pretended and taught to the contrary, his Conſcience told him there was a Righteous Judge of all the Earth.

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The ſum is; The belief of God's Exiſtence hath been the general belief of all Ages and Countries; and for that very reaſon *Epicurus* himſelf was willing it ſhould paſs on ſtill. 'Twas obſerved before of that Conceited Man, That though in fact, and in the natural conſequence of his Principles he denied God, yet for fear of the ſevere Laws and People of *Athens*, in words he own'd a Deity; and that for this conſideration, becauſe Nature it ſelf had imprinted

Ibid.

Printed on all mens minds a notion of God; as his Diſciple *Villeius* in *Cicero* ſaid of him. For, ſaid he, what Nation, or ſort of men is there, which have not, without Learning, ſome anticipation of a Deity, which *Epicurus* called a Prolepſis, or Pre-notion? And ſince that Opinion is not grounded upon any Inſtitution, Cuſtom, or Law, and yet continues the firm, unſhaken belief of all men, therefore people ought to profeſs the belief of a Deity.

And now what is the ſingular Imagination of a few vain, wanton Wretches, to the ſettled Perſuaſion of all the World beſides? Muſt all men be deceived in their notions of God, becauſe *Democritus* and *Epicurus* would not ſeem to own them? There are ſometimes Monſtroſities in Nature; and ſo there are too often in Opinion; nor is any thing ſo abſurd and monſtrous, but it has been diſputed for; at leaſt, may be diſputed for by men of parts; and doth it hence follow that the contrary Principles are not true? One Philoſoper maintain'd, that there is no ſuch thing as Motion; another would have perſuaded people that Snow is black; and ſome ſtood in it, that the ſame

ſame thing may be, and may not be at the ſame time, and in the ſame reſpect; that is, that both parts of a Contradiction can be true; and ſhall ſuch odd Whimſeys prevail againſt the common Senſe and Reaſon of Mankind? Some never ſaw the light in all their lives; and doth this argue that there is no real Sun? or, that That is no Sun which the whole World beholds? Why, a man of unprejudiced and impartial Reaſon may with his mind as eaſily ſee God in his Works, as I can ſee the day with my eyes. But ſhould I ſo affect ſingularity as to ſhut my eyes, and then pretend that all the World is a diſmal, dark, confuſed Chaos; could it be concluded hence, that there is not one Star in the Firmament? why, 'tis as ſenſeleſs to conclude that there is no God, and that Mankind have been all along miſtaken in their belief of God, becauſe two or three Impious Philoſophers have ſhut the eyes of their Underſtanding againſt him. This indeed is an argument againſt themſelves; a proof of their own folly, ſtupidity, and wickedneſs: But 'tis no argument againſt all other men, who have no mind to be ſo ſtupid and irreligious as they

they were: 'Tis far from being a proof, that there is no Exiſting Deity, as the generality of men have been in all times and places unanimouſly and throughly perſuaded.

2. Nay, that I may proceed to the Second thing I propoſed under this Head, from Matter of Fact to Evidence of Reaſon; this Univerſal Conſent is a ſtrong Argument of God's Exiſtence. For whence could this common belief proceed, but from a common, natural Principle, wherewith the Souls of all men were endued by the Common Creator, to bear witneſs of his Being, as a Signature made by his own Finger?

I do not mean, that the Notions we have of God are connatural to the Soul; that is, inbred, innate, and engraven, as it were, in our minds, upon our Conception in the Womb, ſo that every man in his Senſes doth of himſelf, by common inſtinct, underſtand that there is a God. Methinks we need not go ſo far. It is enough that there is in us an inclination towards God, a diſpoſition and propenſion to Religion, and an aptneſs to receive the knowledge of God upon Inſtruction, Education,

tion, and the uſe of common Reaſon. This we may well call a Natural Principle; and ſo the Notions we have of God are Natural Notions, becauſe they do naturally reſult from the free exerciſe of our Natural Faculties.

Now this plainly infers the Exiſtence of God; becauſe none but God could put the Souls of all Mankind into this frame: None but the Author of Nature could be the Author of thoſe Principles in our Nature, whereby every man is able to diſcover and find out God; as all men have done, and do, who uſe their Reaſon. All have conſented in this, that there is a Deity: Of this One, Univerſal, Uniform Principle there muſt be One, Univerſal, Uniform Cauſe; nor can any other Cauſe be reaſonably aſſigned, but that Soveraign Being, who is the Cauſe of all things, and who ordered our common Nature thus. Had not God made our Faculties ſo, that the belief of his Exiſtence ſprings forth in every one's mind with his Reaſon, and grows up with his Reaſon, we might argue with *Lucilius* in *Cicero*, That it would have been impoſſible for that Belief to have continued every where conſtant, or to have been con-

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confirmed by a long tract of time, and to have become inveterate together with mens Ages. For vain, fictitious Opinions wear out by Diuturnity. Time diſcovers and deſtroys the falſhood of Imagination, but confirms the ſolid dictates and determinations of Nature. Which ſhews, that this common, laſting Notion of the Exiſtence of God, is natural, and owes its original to a Power above, whoſe workmanſhip we all are.

To defend themſelves againſt the ſtrength of this Argument, thoſe that ſay in their hearts there is no God, pretend that this ſo univerſal a belief of the Exiſtence of a Deity, may be imputed to one or other of theſe four Cauſes, if not to all of them: Tradition, Fear, State-policy, and common Compact; the vanity of which Pretence I am now to ſhew, that I may not paſs by any thing material which lies in my way, upon this neceſſary, uſeful, and ſeaſonable Subject.

1. As to the pretence of Tradition, though we ſuppoſe it to have been one Cauſe of that Univerſal Conſent I have ſpoken of, yet theſe two things muſt be ſaid: *Firſt*, That Tradition ar-

gues the Truth of the Belief; and therefore is alledg'd to no purpoſe. *Secondly*, That Tradition of it ſelf alone, and without the dictates of Nature, could not have been a ſufficient cauſe of this Univerſal Conſent.

Firſt, Tradition argues the Truth of that Belief which hath prevailed amongſt all Mankind. By Tradition is meant (if men will ſpeak Senſe and Reaſon) an Opinion handed down from ſome Firſt Authors: Nor can any other Authors of this Tradition be aſſigned, but thoſe from whoſe Loins all Mankind deſcended; for how was it poſſible for a common Principle to ſpring but from a common Root, our Firſt Parents? Now this leads us back to the Times which *Moſes* ſpeaks of, when the Firſt Parents of Mankind were formed. And the Faith of God's Exiſtence being derived originally from them, cannot but be unqueſtionably true; becauſe they could not but know their own beginning: They could not but know, that God had made them after a preternatural manner; that God had formed them by his immediate Power; and that they came out of the hands of God:

God: Nor is it conceivable, that they ſhould have taught their Children the knowledge of God, had not they themſelves been ſure there was One: That they ſhould wilfully and deſignedly impoſe a Fiction upon all their Poſterity, and ſuch a Fiction too as would keep their minds in continual bondage under the moſt frightful apprehenſions; this is an Imagination which confounds the Underſtanding of any reaſonable man, and is altogether unaccountable.

Beſides, Had not the Tradition been certain, how could it have held ſo every where in the World, and all along for ſeveral Thouſand years to this day? Fables are apt to be ſoon loſt, what Hand ſoever ſends them abroad to paſs about in the World. The falſhood of them is ſomewhere or other diſcover'd in time; eſpecially when Inquiſitive and Wiſe men begin to ſearch into them, and to examine what ſubſtance there is in them, and what credit they are of: And how was it poſſible for this Tradition, had it been fabulous, to have gone through the world without interruption, or ſtop, notwithſtanding all the moſt Curious Enquiries in ſo many Philoſophical and Learned Ages? This

ſhews, that the Tradition is grounded upon Principles of Nature; that therefore it is common with our Nature; and muſt be as conſtant and common as Humane Nature continues.

2. To which I add, *Secondly*, That though Truth went along with the Tradition, yet of it ſelf alone, and without the Dictates of Nature, it could not have been univerſally received in all Places and Ages. For every one is not ready to embrace Truth it ſelf, though it be never ſo probable; and when it is received, in proceſs of time it doth often drop; nor is it eaſy to conceive how this Truth could have gone ſo current, as it hath gone, in all parts, and from hand to hand, without any conſiderable oppoſition, unleſs it had had the help of ſtrong Reaſon to ſupport it, and to carry it on ſtill. No doubt but *Adam* taught his Children, in that long tract of time, the Nine hundred and thirty years of his life, many Truths, both Philoſophical and Divine, which yet are now quite loſt; eſpecially to thoſe people who have not the uſe of thoſe Books which are open before us. Nay, though we are able by the help of Diſcourſe to gather

gather divers things out of *Moſes*'s Writings, which the old Pagans had no knowledge at all of; yet are there ſeveral matters which we our ſelves are to ſeek for, becauſe they are not evident from clear, cogent Principles of Nature. But this great Truth concerning the Exiſtence of God hath been propagated all along together with Mankind, and as people have every where multiplied ſucceſſively from Generation to Generation. Nay, the higher we go to thoſe Elder times after the Creation, the leſs of Infidelity we find. Though there were then very few Books in the World, yet God was believed on, and even by thoſe who in their lives diſhonoured him: For in thoſe days Nature ſpake with ſimplicity, and much plainer and better than in after-times, when men of wanton Wits, and of baſe Minds, uſed Arts, and ſo corrupted and debauch'd their Natural Reaſon. This ſhews, that the Belief of God's Exiſtence is grounded upon ſomething in Humane Nature, which hath ſtill preſerv'd it in the world, notwithſtanding the miſcarriage of many other Traditions which our old Anceſtors tranſmitted to their Poſterity, and left

with them. This hath eſcaped undeſtroy'd, uncontradicted but by a very few Partial, Conceited, and Deſigning Men; of which no other cauſe can be rationally aſſigned, but that it is moſt conſonant to the frame of our Nature, a Natural Principle, an Idea of God which he himſelf hath, as it were, imprinted and ſtamp'd upon every ones minds, ſo that it cannot be worn out by Time it ſelf, which weareth out other Notions that are not fixt and rivetted, as this is, into the common Reaſon of Mankind; and therefore it is not to be imputed to mere Tradition.

2. Nor, *Secondly*, Can it be imputed to Fear; which is the next Pretence. For thoſe who would deſtroy the Belief of a God, would fain perſuade the world, that it is only a thing of Phancy, a fictitious, frightful Idea, put into peoples heads by Deſigning Men, or formed in their Brains by the power of their own Imagination; and that their minds being once ſcared, were eaſily bent to conceive that there is a Terrible Being over them, which thoſe bold, hardy Wretches imagine to be nothing but a Bugbear, without any real Exiſtence;

and

and accordingly they bottom Religion upon groundleſs Fears; believing Hell, and Damnation, and a Deity, to be Figments, things invented and talked of to terrify the World; and ſo the Atheiſtical Author of the *Leviathan* repreſents them, comparing them, as he has the confidence to expreſs it, to an empty Hat upon a crooked Stick to fright Birds from the Corn. I ſhould beg every good Chriſtian's pardon for but mentioning ſuch Impiety, did not the Looſeneſs of the Age we live in conſtrain us to take notice of the ſtrange Notions that are got abroad: The meaning whereof in ſhort is, That if people were not frighted out of their Wits, they would hardly believe the Exiſtence of a Deity; for they ground that Belief upon Fear, and make Popular Fear to be the cauſe of it. And hence it is, they think, that this Belief hath generally prevailed in the World; not from any Natural Principle in the Underſtanding, but from a ſlaviſh, fooliſh Paſſion of heart; and becauſe men have been every where taught to be fearful and timorous, or have made themſelves ſo.

Now to every Conſiderate, Rational Man, it is plain, that Fear cannot be the cauſe of that Belief, but is the conſequence and effect of it: That is, Men do not believe a God, becauſe they are afraid; but are therefore afraid, becauſe they believe there is one, a Juſt and Powerful Being over all: And therefore their Fears proceed from an Univerſal, Common, and Natural Principle in every ones mind, touching God's Exiſtence; for otherwiſe it were impoſſible for mens Fears to be ſo great, ſo univerſal, ſo fixt in Humane Nature, as never to be eradicated.

Firſt, It can never ſtand with common Reaſon to conceive, how Fear ſhould create Tormenting Apprehenſions of a Being, whom all Mankind have ever adored for his great Goodneſs, and whom Heathen Philoſophers themſelves have diſcover'd by the Light of Nature, to be for his Divine Perfections the moſt Lovely and Deſirable Being in the whole world. What Reverence ſoever the ſenſe of his Greatneſs may call for, diſquieting Terrors of a Being ſo infinitely Perfect, cannot ſpring but from an Evil Conſcience: And then

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I appeal to all Men of Senſe, whether that Conſcience ought to be heard againſt God, whoſe Intereſt it is to have *none*. This is certain, That there can be no fear, where there is not ſuppoſed an Object to be afraid of. That Object muſt be acknowledged, not only to be, but to be Angry and Threatning; otherwiſe our Faculties would be both vain and deluſory, conſtrained to fear where no grounds of fear are; which is to reproach Nature it ſelf, that is ſo adored by ſome Infidels, and to impeach it for a Common Cheat.

Secondly, Though we ſhould think ſome particular Perſons impoſed upon by their Fears; yet how could all Men in the World fall under the ſame Impoſture at once? How could they be ſeiz'd with one Agony univerſally, but from an Epidemical Principle in Humane Nature? Or, how could they all jump together in one Principle without the Hand of a God who made them all, and intended by this means to hold them all faſt to himſelf?

Thirdly, If we ſhould be ſo unreaſonable as to ſuppoſe Mankind to have been frighted all at the ſame inſtant, no body knows by whom, or when, or how;

how; and by that fright to have been poſſeſt with the thoughts of a Deity, can we ſuppoſe too that they had no time in ſo many Ages, to recover themſelves out of that panick Diſtemper? Fear is a cruciating and tormenting Paſſion, which every Man is deſirous to rid himſelf of as ſoon as he can; and would all Mankind be plagued with it perpetually, and without grounds? If it be ſaid, That ſome Philoſophers have found out the unreaſonableneſs of it, and for that reaſon have diſcarded the Notion of a Deity, which was the effect of it; how came it to paſs, that thoſe Philoſophers themſelves could not void their own minds of that Fear notwithſtanding? It was obſerved before out of *Cicero*, That *Epicurus*, as great an Atheiſt as he was, could not rid himſelf of the fear of God and Death; and if the hearts of his Followers were throughly ſearched, it will be found, that none are more fearful than they; which is a plain ſign, that there are Briars and Thorns in their Conſciences that can never be pluck'd up by the Roots; that there is a Teſtimony of God within them, and that how ſlightly and contumeliouſly ſoever they may talk of a God in

in their fits, there is an abiding Conviction upon their minds, that there is a God that judgeth the Earth, and will one day render to every Man according to his works.

There is an end of fear, when once it is diſcovered to be groundleſs; and if *Democritus*, and the reſt of them, did verily believe, there was no God, what made them ſtill afraid? This fear could not raiſe the Notion of a Deity in them, becauſe they diſputed againſt the Notion. No; it was the Notion of God, which their Conſciences could not part with, whatever they ſaid; it was this that kept them in fear. For Nature will not lye, however Mens Tongues may; and the terrible Apprehenſions which thoſe very Men laboured under, are a plain argument, that the belief of God's Exiſtence is inſeparable from all mens Reaſon; a Principle never to be pulled or torn out of Humane Nature, becauſe radicated in it by the Maker of Mankind.

3. It is ſuggeſted alſo, That the univerſal belief of a Deity was introduced by the contrivance of Politick Princes, who took advantage by the panick fears of

of People to confirm their apprehenſions, and to fill their minds with Notions of a God, that thereby they might the better keep their Subjects in Peace and Obedience to their Commands, and in continual Awe of an Inviſible, Omnipotent Being, that would puniſh both in this World, and in another, all Sedition, Contumacy, and Diſorders, though never ſo ſecretly acted; and ſo they reſolve all Religion into State Policy, as if it were nothing but an Impoſture, and Artificial Engine of Civil Government, formed by the Wit and Cunning of deſigning Legiſlators. One of the thirty Tyrants at *Athens*, *Critias* by Name, is thought to have been one of the firſt that ſuggeſted this, and fancied the belief of a Deity to be an Invention and Trick of State; and from him that fancy is come down to us, and hath poſſeſt the Brains of ſome in this Age, who are much of the Principles and Temper of *Critias*. I call it a fancy, becauſe it is an unreaſonable imagination upon theſe four Accounts.

1. *Firſt*, It is not conceivable, how any Pagan, though never ſo great a Stateſman or Philoſopher, could at firſt without any Preconception or Diſpoſi-

tion

tion towards a Deity, deviſe and create in his mind a bright Idea of ſo glorious a Being, and of thoſe Divine Properties which eſſentially belong to a Nature that is acknowledged to be eminently and abſolutely Perfect. If it be ſaid, This Idea was firſt formed by the ſtrength of Humane Reaſon, the Point is gained, that the Notion of a Deity is grounded in the intellectual part of Humane Nature, a rational, natural Principle; and for that cauſe, the belief of a God has been univerſally profeſt all over the World. If it was not the work of Reaſon, but a kind of Phantaſm that fell by meer chance into the man's Imagination, a caſual and contingent Idea, that one would think might as well have dropt into the phancy of a Common Animal without the uſe of Reaſon: How is it conceivable, that ſuch a glorious Idea, as the Idea of God is, could be firſt framed in any mans Imagination by chance? The Idea of a Being of all the moſt glittering Perfections? The Idea of a moſt Wiſe, Righteous, and Gracious Being? The Idea of an Omnipotent, Benign Cauſe of all things? In ſhort, The Idea of a Being that is the moſt glorious, beautiful, and charming

charming Object for the Rational Faculty to be fixt on, and to contemplate, and for one's heart to deſire? How could ſuch an Idea fall into any one's fancy by meer chance, and without the Operation of Reaſon?

2. Or *Secondly*, How can ſuch an imaginary Figment of the Brain be reaſonably thought to have poſſeſt the minds of all the Politicians in the World at once, and that by chance too? How could they all entertain the ſame Notions of God at the ſame time, if they were fictitious things; or if there were not great Reaſons for them in Nature? How could Men of ſo many different Languages, and in ſo many diſtant Places and Countries, conſpire all at once to deviſe a Notion, for which there was no Reaſon, Ground, or Truth?

3. Or, *Thirdly*, If all Princes could have joyn'd together to couzen the World, how is it conceiveable that they would, or could have put a cheat upon themſelves, and have deceived their own minds? For Princes and Stateſmen lie under the apprehenſions of God as well as other Men; and the moſt hardy, crafty Politician is ſome time or other afraid of him, as *Caligula* was when

when he heard it thunder. God hath been the Hope of good Princes, and the Terror of bad Ones; and what ground could they themſelves have for their expectation of Rewards or Puniſhments, if the belief of a Deity had been an Invention of their own; and if their ſecret deſign hereby was to keep, not themſelves, but their People in Awe?

4. But though all this were ſuppoſed poſſible, yet how can it be imagined that the moſt ſubtle Stateſman could deceive the minds of all other Men in the World for ſuch a long Tract and Succeſſion of Ages, with a groundleſs and unreaſonable Opinion? There are but two ways of propagating a Fiction, *viz.* Violence and Fraud, and neither of theſe can with any colour of ſenſe be pretended in this Caſe. *Firſt*, For Violence, no Hiſtory can ſhew, that ever it was uſed to make People believe the Being of a Deity. Whatever force has been uſed, was intended to eſtabliſh ſome particular Form of Religion, and Manner of Worſhip, which Men in Power thought moſt agreeable; and in their ſevere proceedings they intended not to create in People's minds the Faith of God's Exiſtence, but did ſuppoſe that,

and

and took it for granted, and took advantage by it to carry on their great End, which was, to bring People to a particular Mode of Religion, that they themſelves were beſt pleas'd with. Beſides, Violence, if it had been uſed in this Caſe, could not have done their work, becauſe the Minds of Men are never to be forced, eſpecially into an univerſal Belief, and without the help of Reaſon. Whatever External Profeſſions and Compliances it may bring a few timorous Perſons to, it cannot alone work upon the Underſtanding and Conſcience, to receive an Opinion which is not in it ſelf evident or probable; rather, Men are apt to hate an Opinion that is brought with the terrible Pomp of Sword and Fire; witneſs all the unſucceſsful Attempts of Princes, who inſtead of propagating their Religion, have ſtill done it hurt by Sanguinary Methods. The difficulties here would have been far greater, nay, inſuperable, to force all the People in the World into the belief of a thing ſo contrary to the Inclinations and Eaſe of their own Minds; to make them believe that there is an Almighty Being over them, that obſerves all their evil Actions, and will

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moſt certainly puniſh them; and ſo to bring them under a neceſſity of poſſeſſing themſelves Day and Night with tormenting Anxieties; this is ſo inconſiſtent with thoſe deſires which every one naturally hath of enjoying all poſſible Satisfaction and Comfort in his own breaſt, that it would have been impoſſible for all the World to have been forced into an univerſal Belief of it, had there not been an univerſal Principle in Nature to oblige them to it. Fear is a diſquieting Paſſion, which every Man would clear his mind of as ſoon as he can. Some who have been bred up in the fear of God, have endeavoured to force themſelves out of it, even againſt their Conſciences and Reaſon; and how all Mankind could be forced into it without their Conſciences and Reaſon, is altogether unconceiveable.

It is therefore pretended in the next place, That this was done by the ſubtle and fraudulent Arts of Politicians; and that People believed, becauſe they were told by their Governors, that there was a Deity. But to tell, is one thing; and to perſwade, another. People are not wont, much leſs are all People in the World diſpos'd to have ſo very kind an

Opinion of their Superiors, as to believe them upon their bare words; eſpecially in a caſe which touches them ſo nearly; and wherein all the Pleaſure of their Lives, and the Peace of their Minds are ſo deeply concern'd. For Men have ever found, that Senſe, Wiſdom, and Honeſty, do not always go along with Power. Great Men may be as weak and ſhallow in their Intellectuals as others, as ſoon miſtaken in their Meaſures, as eaſily diſappointed of their Ends; nay, more apt to be put upon, than to impoſe. And though ſome may be very skilful in their Conduct, yet may they be deſigning; and the more politick any Governors are thought, the more ready are People to be very jealous of their Intentions; and how it could happen all at once, that all Stateſmen ſhould be ſo politick as to contrive, and all Mankind ſhould be ſo credulous as to conſent to a Fiction of ſo great a Nature and Conſequence, is a queſtion which may well ask any Man of Reaſon, how this can agree with it? But beſides, ſuppoſe ſuch a lucky hit did once, (no Man knows when) fall out; how is it imaginable, That a politick Artifice could have paſt every

every where all along from Age to Age, without being diſcovered by the greateſt part of Mankind? There are very few probable Truths, but ſome time or other have met with Contradiction; and when an Impoſture comes to be notorious, it is for ever baffled; and if the belief of a Deity had been ſuch, how can we think, that a Deſign formed to terrify and rack the World, ſhould not have been found out and ſpoiled many Ages ago; eſpecially when inquiſitive Philoſophers travelled up and down into ſo many parts to diſcover what was true, and what was falſe, and to communicate their thoughts where ever they went? Still they returned home confirmed in their belief of a God, as the Rational Senſe of all Men; and though in after-times ſome few Opiniators pretended to be ſingular, yet were they hooted at, ſcorn'd, and hated; and the ancient, univerſal Belief went on ſtill, which makes it evident, that it was of ſtrength enough to ſupport it ſelf; and the more narrowly it was lookt into, the greater Subſtance was found within it, and the greater Solidity at the bottom of it; being highly conſonant to every Man's

Reaſon, and founded in our Common Nature.

4. It is pretended, laſtly, That the univerſal Belief of a God might have been introduced by common Compact, or mutual Agreemeent among Mankind, which is as ſenſleſs and ſilly an Imagination as any other; for how was it poſſible for ſuch an Agreement to have been begun, managed, carried on, and ratified, with the expreſs conſent of all People in the World? Surely they that think ſo, muſt imagine, that the World lies within a very narrow compaſs; and that intelligence in thoſe Days was very quick, and that the minds of all Men were wonderfully credulous. 'Tis a great rarity to find in any one little Country or Town, an entire agreement in matters of Opinion, though they carry with them ſufficient reaſons of credibility; and was it ever poſſible for ſo many Nations in the World, of ſuch different Languages, ſo vaſtly diſtant from one another, of ſuch ſeveral Inclinations, Cuſtoms, and Intereſts, ſo divided by Seas, and without any Mutual Commerce or Correſpondence; is it likely, I ſay, That they could all deliberately

deliberately agree in one and the ſame Notion of their own making by Pact, Covenant, and Stipulation? And that too, to abridge themſelves of the Pleaſures of Life, to bring themſelves into Slavery under fears of their own creating, to crucify their Hearts with mortifying Expectations, to render themſelves tame and managable by their Governors, to propagate a Fiction, and thereby to make their Poſterity for ever melancholy and miſerable, if there were no God?

But this pretence is ſo very Abſurd and Phantaſtical, that to confute it any further would be time loſt; and therefore the premiſes being rightly conſidered, muſt neceſſarily infer, that the Belief of a Deity is a Principle rooted in Humane Nature; Notwithſtanding all the various Modes of Religion which are in the World, all Nations Conſent in this Principle, perhaps it is the only Principle wherein all are agreed: Which ſhews, That it is the neceſſary and immediate Reſult of Common Reaſon. It ſprings out of our Natural Faculties, as ſoon as we uſe them. We bring the Seminals of Religion into the World with us; and the univerſal Belief

of a Deity is a ſtrong argument of God's Exiſtence, becauſe it could come from no other hand but his that gave us our Faculties, and framed our Nature ſo, that by the exerciſe of our Faculties we may preſently diſcover the Hand that made us, and gave us our Being, and hath ſet a mark of himſelf upon the minds of all Men, whereby his Being may be diſcerned and known, though all the Glories of his Nature cannot be fully comprehended.

If at laſt it be ſaid, That this Argument touching univerſal Conſent is not ſtrong enough to prove the Truth of God's Exiſtence, becauſe then it would prove too the truth of Idolatry, foraſmuch as all Nations were once Idolaters, and conſented in the worſhip of a great many Deities: To this, two things may be eaſily returned,

Firſt, That there was no ſuch univerſal Conſent as to that; no, not among the Pagans themſelves. For though they worſhipped a plurality of Objects, and the vulgar People paid their Devotions to them, as to ſo many real and diſtinct Deities; yet (as I ſhew'd before) they own'd One Supreme God, and look'd

look'd upon the reſt as Inferior Beings; Deities that had been generated or made by the great Cauſe of all things, and them they adored for his ſake, and upon his account, as Deputies and Adminiſtrators under him, and as Mediators for Men to him; ſo that they referred their Worſhip to him by them, and did terminate all of it in him. And yet the wiſer ſort of Men among them, did not eſteem that multitude of Deities, as ſo many real Perſons, Subſtances, and Beings diſtinct from the Supreme, but rather as ſo many ſeveral Virtues and Powers of One Sovereign *Numen*, perſonated fictitiouſly, according to the various Works and Manifeſtations of that One God, that did Pervade all things, did Exiſt in all things, did Act in all things, and was conceived by them to be in a manner all things, and conſequently was, as they thought, moſt honoured, and beſt ſerv'd by the Religious Honours which were given him by and through his Works every where, as he manifeſted every where his Virtue, and diſplay'd his Power. So that the great Error among the old Heathens, ſeems not to have been about the Exiſtence of One God, (as to which

See Dr. Cudworth's Intel. Syſtem. l. 1. c. 4. p. 502.

they were well agreed) but about the way and manner of Worſhipping him; as to that, they were divided in their Opinions; ſome believing the Supreme God to be worſhipped joyntly with other Deities; and the reſt conceiving him to be worſhipped alone under ſeveral Names, Titles, and Appellations. Now, though the Being of God was a thing ſo evident, obvious, and bright, that it flaſh'd in all their faces, yet in their Notions of God's Worſhip (a thing which required greater uſe of Reaſon and Philoſophy) they were puzled and diſtracted; and therefore univerſal Conſent cannot be pleaded to prove the truth of their Religion, and the real Exiſtence of all their Deities; becauſe they were not generally agreed as to that, as they were in this Common Principle, That there is One God over all things.

2. *Secondly*, How groſs ſoever the Conceits of the Heathens were, the whole account of the matter ſhews, That they were inclined and willing to Worſhip the True God, if they could but have certainly known where or how to have found him. In places of the thickeſt Darkneſs, and in times of the greateſt

greateſt Ignorance, there was in all Men a Propenſity to ſome Religion or other; ſo that rather than People would have no God at all, they would adore many, which ſtill ſerves to confirm the Point in hand, That the belief of a Deity is radicated in Humane Nature, how hard ſoever ſome few odd Men have labour'd and ſtrain'd to tear it out. Seeing a belief ſo univerſal cannot be founded on meer Tradition, or Fear, or Policy, or any adviſed Agreement, and Inſtitution amongſt Mankind; if we will enquire ſoberly into the Reaſons of it, no other rational Account can be given, but that the Faculties of our Nature are ſo framed by the Excellent Wiſdom and Power of God, that upon the due exerciſe of our Underſtanding and Reaſon, an Idea of God ariſeth in every one's mind; which is, therefore rightly called a Natural Idea, becauſe it may be formed by the uſe of our Natural Faculties, without the aſſiſtance of ſpecial Revelation; and becauſe our Nature is ſo ordered by the Father of Spirits: Divines rightly ſay, That the Idea of God is imprinted on all Mens minds by the Finger of God, and is a mark of himſelf, and of his own

own ſetting, to let us know that we are all his, and to draw from us all poſſible returns of Praiſes and Reverence, of Admiration and Love, of Imitation and Obedience, and Univerſal Submiſſion to his Divine Will and Pleaſure.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

HAVING fully conſider'd this Argument of God's Exiſtence, taken from the Univerſal Conſent of Mankind, and the Common Principle which is in Humane Nature; I proceed now to that which was propoſed as the Third Head; *viz.* The Conſideration of ſome Extraordinary Occurrences in the World, which further argue the Being of a God.

And here many things might be taken notice of, were I minded to let this Diſcourſe ſwell into a great bulk; as, The Strange Diſcoveries which have been made of many the moſt Secret Villanies; the Wonderful Events, whereby the Deſigns of Wicked Men have been prevented and over-rul'd; the Various Providences whereby Oppreſt Innocence hath been vindicated and deliver'd, the Several Revelations of the Divine Will which have been given ſince the beginning of the Creation, the conſtant ſupporting of Government and Order in the World, the remarkable Tranſlation of Empires for Peoples Pro-

Provocations; the Aſtoniſhing Examples which have been made of many Bold, Incorrigible Wretches; and the like: All which do in their kind ſhew, that there is a Divine Diſpoſer and Governor of the Univerſe; an Obſerving and Righteous God, that judgeth all the Earth. But becauſe theſe may chance to be looked upon rather as Popular Suggeſtions, than Convincing, Solid Arguments, I ſhall for brevity ſake wave them, and inſiſt only upon Two things, which the moſt Judicious Men are commonly wont to urge, and which indeed are paſt all contradiction, if matter of Fact can be made appear: And they are

1. *Firſt*, Such Miraculous Works, as could never have been done but by an Almighty Power: And,

2. *Secondly*, Such Predictions and Propheſies, as could never have been delivered without the foreknowledge of an Omniſcient Being.

1. *Firſt*, For thoſe Miraculous Works which could never have been done without an Almighty Power. By Miracles I mean ſuch as are True Miracles;

cles; or ſuch Effects, as no Second, Subordinate Cauſe can poſſibly work of it ſelf; no Finite, Natural Agent can do by any Cauſality, or Virtue of its own. And of ſuch Miracles there ſeem to be theſe Three ſorts, which moſt of all relate to the matter in hand:

1. *Firſt*, Such as have been done without any Concurrence or Inſtrumentality of Second Cauſes; nay, ſuch as could never have been done by any Limited Power: As the giving ſight to thoſe who were born without Eyes; the making the Sun to go back, or to ſtand ſtill; the Raiſing of the Dead to life again; and the multiplying a few Loaves and Fiſhes to ſatisfy Five thouſand People.

2. Such Effects, as perhaps *might* have been done in *time* by the help of Natural means, but yet never *were*, nor *could* be wrought on a *ſudden* by their uſe and application; as, the healing of the Leproſy in a moment; the inſtantaneous removing of the Palſey, and the like Difficult and Inveterate Diſtempers.

3. Such Effects as have been done by the uſe of Means; but yet ſuch a ſort

ſort of Means, as were indiſpos'd for thoſe Operations; nay, were utterly uncapable of themſelves to produce thoſe ſtrange Effects: As, the Dividing of the Sea with a Rod; the Separating of Waters by ſmiting them with a Mantle; the Curing of a Leproſy by waſhing in a Common River; the Sweetning of a Bitter Fountain with a Piece of Wood; the giving Sight to the Blind by the application of Clay and Spittle; the Reſtoring of the Deaf and Dumb by putting a Finger into the Ear; the Healing of many Infirmities with a Touch, with the Hem of a Garment, with an Handkerchief, with a Word, with a Shadow of a Man paſſing by, and the like.

All theſe Extraordinary Occurrences are above the Powers of all Art and Nature: The *firſt* ſort, in reſpect of the *Quality* of them; the reſt in reſpect of the *Manner* of their *Production.* No Creature can ſtop the Courſe of the Sun, any more than he can pull all the Stars out of the Firmament. No Creature can form an Eye, or any Integral part of it, any more than he can extinguiſh the Light of the Day: No Creature can recover the Dead, any more than he

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can mould an Humane Soul and Body out of the duſt. Nor can any Creature do one Wonder (though it be only a Wonder in Nature, or to outward appearance) either without means, or by means indiſpoſed, incompetent, and inſufficient, any more than he can frame a World, or govern the Univerſe by his Beck. The Nature of theſe things, and the Power that is requiſite to bring them to paſs, ſets them above all the reach of Natural, Finite, Limited Agents; and therefore when they are done, they are plain Demonſtrations of a Superior Power, Arguments of an Uncontroulable Hand, Proofs of an Almighty Agent; that is, of the Exiſtence of a God.

1. For *firſt*; None but an All-powerful Being can alter the Eſtabliſh'd *Courſe* and *Order* of things. Every part of the World is under ſome peculiar Law, which it regularly and conſtantly obſerves. Though here and there Nature may commit ſome ſlight Error in its Specifick Operations; yet the great Laws of the Univerſe ſtand, and hold againſt all Natural Agents; and every Creature yieldeth Obedience to them. There-

Therefore when the ſetled Courſe of the Creature is altered (as it always is when a True Miracle is wrought) it is an undeniable Argument of a Superior Hand, which gave every thing its Law, Never to be changed but by the ſame Power which fix'd it; and againſt which no Law can poſſibly hold, when that Sovereign Being hath a mind to diſpoſe of a Creature into a different Courſe. As for inſtance; 'Tis a Law which the Waters are under, That they ſhall perpetually conſiſt of fluid parts, by means whereof they naturally run into, and maintain an inviolable ſtate of mixture and co-adunation. 'Tis a Law the Heavens are under, That the Lamps thereof ſhall be Day and Night in motion. 'Tis a Law every Man is under, That the Duſt ſhall return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit ſhall return unto him that gave it. According to theſe Laws doth the Courſe and Order of all theſe things hold, never to be broken or changed by the natural force of any of their Fellow-Creatures. Now when it ſo happens, that either an Heavenly Body is arreſted in its progreſs; or that the Sea is thrown up and conſolidated into ſtanding

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ing heaps; or that a man's Soul, which had eſcaped out of its Priſon, is ſent back again out of the other world, and remanded into its Cold, Earthly, and Ruinated Lodgings; it is impoſſible with Reaſon to aſcribe this to any other Cauſe, but the Omnipotence of a Tranſcendent Being, who governs and diſpoſeth all things in Heaven and Earth of his own good pleaſure. And it ſhews, that the firſt ſort of Miracles, *viz.* ſuch as have been done without the operation of any Second Cauſes, nor could have been done by them, are clear Atteſtations of the Exiſtence of a Deity, under whoſe Hand and Power all other Beings are.

2. And then, *Secondly*, Touching the other ſorts of Miracles, ſuch as have been wrought inſtantly, and without means ſufficient of themſelves, as the Curing of Diſeaſes in a moment by a Word, or a Touch; they are the productions of things out of nothing; which cannot be attributed to any thing leſs than a Deity. For in theſe Caſes there is an utter indiſpoſition, both in the Means, and in the Object about which thoſe Means are uſed; and conſequently, ſuch a Miracle is a

kind of Creation, which nothing but Omnipotence can produce. There is little, if any, difference, as to the Power, between raiſing things out of no pre-exiſtent Matter, and forming things out of Matter that in it ſelf is quite uncapable of that formation; in each Caſe an Almighty Power is neceſſary; and where that Power is, it is the ſame thing to it, in effect, to bring Perfections out of utter Incapacities, as to bring Habits out of Privations, or Subſtance out of Non-entity. Which is an evident Proof, That granting thoſe Miracles were really done, which we find recorded of the Prophets in the *Old Teſtament*, and eſpecially of our Saviour, and his Apoſtles in the *New*, they muſt be acknowledg'd to have been wrought by a Divine Power, or by the hand of an Omnipotent Being; and conſequently that ſuch an Omnipotent Being doth Exiſt.

Hence it is, that True Miracles are always deſtructive of Infidelity; ſo that where-ever they have been ſhew'd, all Teachable Men have been convinced of the particular Providence of an Almighty God over that People. When *Naaman* the *Syrian* found himſelf healed of

of his Leproſy, by waſhing in *Jordan* at the inſtance of *Eliſha*, it extorted that Confeſſion from him, *Behold, now I know, that there is no God in all the earth, but in Iſrael,* 2 Kings 5. 15. When that Nobleman, *John* 4. ſaw what a Miracle was wrought on his dying Son, the Text ſaith, *That himſelf believed, and his whole houſe,* v. 53. When *Sergius Paulus* ſaw what a Miracle was done for the puniſhment of *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *he believed, being aſtoniſhed at the doctrine of the Lord,* Acts 13. 12. In which three Inſtances means were uſed, ſuch as they were. In the firſt, the application of Water; in the two latter, the ſpeaking of a few words only; and yet each Miracle was as convincing, as if God had diſplayed his immediate hand; becauſe the means being of themſelves inſufficient for the production of ſuch aſtoniſhing Events, argued plainly, that an Omnipotent Virtue went along with them, which ſupplied their natural inſufficiency, and ſhewed, that the Excellence of the Power was of God.

What I have ſaid upon this Point doth ſuppoſe, that theſe, and the like Miraculous Works have been actually

done; and if ſo, then the Inference will be neceſſary and unavoidable, That there is a God. But to evade the force of this Argument, the Infidels of our Age have theſe Two things to ſay.

1. *Firſt*, That no True Miracles, or Supernatural Works, have been ever wrought.

2. And *Secondly*, That the Wonders we read of, are no more an Argument of the truth of God's Exiſtence, than they are of the truth of Idolatry, becauſe Idolaters themſelves have pretended to Miracles. Theſe two Subterfuges and Shifts muſt be now conſidered in their order.

1. *Firſt*, They will allow of no higher Miracles than what have been found here in Nature, when ſome unuſual things have hapned, the natural cauſe whereof could not be well aſſigned. As for Supernatural Effects, they are Fables in the account of theſe men; becauſe they cannot admit of ſuch Effects without admitting of a Supernatural Power to produce them; that is, the Exiſtence of a Deity; which of all things

things in the world they are moſt afraid to own.

Now for the clearing of this weighty matter, I would firſt ask theſe great Pretenders to Reaſon, this General Queſtion; Whether it be rational to deny matter of Fact, which hath as good Evidence as can poſſibly be given of any matter of Fact which we have not ſeen with our own eyes? If this be rational, then there is an end of Faith amongſt Mankind, and we muſt believe nothing but what our own Senſes bear witneſs to; and ſo no Credit is to be given to any Hiſtory, or Relation in the world. If it be not rational, then have we as good grounds to believe the truth of Supernatural Effects, or Miracles, as can in reaſon be expected for the truth of any thing that is gone and paſt.

And this ſhall be my next buſineſs, to ſhew, That the Account we have of ſuch and ſuch Miracles done, carries with it as ſtrong Evidence, at leaſt, as any matters of Fact we find in any Hiſtory of former Ages; ſo that with as much reaſon men may reject the belief of any, nay of all Accounts, as the belief of this.

I do not here in the leaſt pretend to ſupport the Credit of all thoſe Appearances which have gone under the name of Miracles, eſpecially in latter Ages. We read of multitudes, which have been either downwright Forgeries and Fictions, purpoſely invented to carry on Lucrative and Superſtitious Deſigns; or elſe have been no better than Illuſions of mens Senſes, whereby the Credulity of weak people hath been impos'd upon, and abus'd. Nay, many of them are of ſuch a ridiculous Nature, that ſome have been aſhamed of the Stories, though they have made Money by the Invention. To talk of ſuch Miracles is a great diſadvantage and prejudice to Chriſt's Religion, however it may ſerve mens private Intereſt.

The Miracles I urge as clear Demonſtrations of the Exiſtence of a God, are thoſe recorded in the Scriptures; in the *Old Teſtament*, by *Moſes*, chiefly; and in the *New*, by the Evangeliſts. And, how ſlight ſoever *Scepticks* make of them, there is as great evidence of the truth of them, as there can be of any matter of fact, if we will be ſo juſt to thoſe Writers, as to allow them the Com-

Common Reputation of having been fair Hiſtorians; though at preſent we ſet aſide the conſideration of their having been divinely Inſpired.

Now the greateſt evidence that can poſſibly be given of any thing that was formerly done, depends upon theſe four Grounds.

1. That the Perſon ſaid to have done it, did really exiſt; or that there was indeed ſuch a Perſon.

2. That the Relators of the Action were ſufficiently Credible.

3. That others who had Reaſon to know, and were able to know the truth of the matter, were ſufficiently ſatisfied of the certainty of it.

4. That things of great and publick Concernment were the conſequents of it. Where there are all theſe grounds of evidence, no reaſonable Men can queſtion any matter of fact, though it was done at a great diſtance of time from them; and from all theſe it appears, that ſuch true Miracles have been done, as argue the Exiſtence of an Omnipotent Agent.

1. For firſt; That there was in the World, ſuch a Man as *Moſes*, and ſuch a Perſon as Jeſus Chriſt, is as evident, even from Humane Teſtimony, as that there were ſuch Men as *Alexander*, *Cæſar*, and *Cato*. *Joſephus* ſhews out of thoſe Ancient Writers, *Manetho* and *Chæremon*, what a great eſteem the old *Egyptians* had of *Moſes*; and what an Admirable Divine Perſon he was in the Account of that Nation. *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us out of the *Greek* Writers, what an Honour the old Philoſophers among them had for *Moſes*'s Memory; and that they look'd upon him as the only wiſe Man in his time, and gave him the Character of a Prince, a Law-giver, a General, a Juſt and Holy Perſon, beloved of God. The ſame Author tells us, That the *Egyptian Myſtæ* believed that *Moſes* was taken up into Heaven; and that *Eupolenius* gave him the Character of the firſt wiſe Man; and that the *Myſtæ* relating the Story of his killing the *Egyptian*, ſaid, That he did it by the word of his Mouth; and that *Artapanus* own'd the Story of his Impriſonment, adding ſome fabulous Stuff concerning his Deliverance. *Numenius*, the *Pythagorean*, ſaid, that

Cont. Appion. *l.* 1.

Stromat. *l.* 1.

Strom. 5.

that *Moſes* was a Divine, and a Prophet; and that his Writings are worthy of belief, and that he was a moſt powerful Man with God by his Prayers. *Trogus Pompeius* mentions *Abraham*, *Moſes*, and *Iſrael*, as Kings of the *Jews*. He takes notice of the many Sons of *Iſrael* (though he miſtakes the number). He ſpeaks particularly, and by Name, of thoſe two Sons of *Iſrael*, *Juda*, and *Joſeph*; and then he goes on relating the ſtory of *Moſes*, and of his leading the *Jews* out of *Egypt*; though he ſophiſticates the Story with a great deal of falſhood, as alſo *Cornelius Tacitus* doth in his Account of *Moſes* and his Conduct: Both which Ancient Hiſtorians follow the Narration which was given of this matter by the *Egyptians* themſelves, who mortally hated the *Jewiſh* Nation, and told a great many Lies, touching the Reaſons and Manner of their Departure from them; as *Joſephus* ſhews in his firſt Book againſt *Appion*. *Juſtin Martyr* upbraiding the *Greeks* in his time for being Enemies to the Chriſtian Religion, proved to them out of their own Authors, that *Moſes*, who laid the Foundations of Chriſtianity, was acknowledg'd much more

Id. 28.

Euſeb. *de prepar. l.* 9. *c.* 8.

Juſtin. *l.* 36. Tac. *l.* 5. *Hiſt.*

Exhortat. ad Græc.

more Ancient than any of their Poets' Hiſtorians, Philoſophers, or Legiſlators' And out of that noble Hiſtorian, *Diodorus*, he told them, That *Moſes* was reckoned a God, by reaſon of his Divine and Excellent Wiſdom, and for teaching People to uſe good Laws, and to live according to them; which Account *Diodorus*, who had ſpent thirty Years in Travels, ſaid he had from the Prieſts in *Egypt*. To theſe Obſervations divers more might be added out of *Grotius*, and other Modern Writers, were it needful. But the Learned know, That as the *Greeks* firſt borrowed their Letters of the *Jews*; ſo the beſt Laws at *Athens*, and afterwards at *Rome*, took their Original from the Laws of *Moſes*.

And that Jeſus Chriſt formerly lived in the Land of *Judea*, is acknowledg'd even by thoſe who were no Friends to his Religion. *Joſephus* the *Jew*, who ſeems to have been our Saviour's Cotemporary, ſaith, That in the Regency of *Pontius Pilate*, there lived one Jeſus, a wiſe Man, (ſaith he) if yet it be fit to call him a Man; becauſe he did many Miracles, and appeared alive again the third Day after his Crucifixion.

Antiq. *l.* 18. *c.* 4.

ſixion. That *Roman* Hiſtorian, *Tacitus*, ſpeaking of the Chriſtians, tells us, That the Author of that Name, was one Chriſt, who in the Reign of *Tiberius* the Emperor was put to Death by *Pontius Pilate*. About fifty Years after our Saviour's Time, *Pliny* the Proconſul of *Bithynia*, ſent the Emperor *Trajan* this Account of the Chriſtians, That their Cuſtom was to ſing Hymns to Chriſt, as to a God. *Suetonius* makes mention of him too, meaning not ſo much his Perſon as his Doctrine. The Acts of *Pilate*, to which the Primitive Chriſtians were wont to appeal, ſhew that there was ſuch a Man once in being. Thoſe Learned Heathens who wrote againſt his Faith, *Celſus*, *Porphyry*, and *Julian*, never queſtioned the Truth of the Hiſtory touching his Life and Death. The moſt hardned *Jews* themſelves, that hate and reproach his Memory, cannot deny, but that there was ſuch a Man, and that their Anceſtors killed him. Nay, they are ſenſible to this day, that for that very reaſon they are deſpiſed and abhorred by the Chriſtian World. So that no account whatſoever of matter of fact can poſſibly be more atteſted,

Cornel. Tac. *l.* 15.

Plin. *l.* 10. *Ep.* 97.

In Vit. Claud.

atteſted, more clear and certain than this is, That Jeſus Chriſt once lived in the World.

2. The next thing is, That the Hiſtory of thoſe Miracles, which are ſaid to have been done by *Moſes* and our Bleſſed Saviour, is alſo as ſufficiently credible, as any Hiſtorical Account can be.

Two Qualifications are neceſſary in an Hiſtorian to make his Relations ſufficiently Credible, Knowledge and Integrity; and where both theſe Qualifications meet, that is, where a Man cannot be ignorant of the Truth of what he writes, nor can be juſtly ſuſpected of an intention to deceive; in that caſe there can be no fair or tolerable reaſon for our disbelief.

1. Now as to *Moſes*'s Knowledge, 'tis impoſſible to conceive, That he knew not what he did himſelf, or that he was not conſcious of his own Actions. And 'tis as impoſſible to think that the Evangeliſts knew not what Jeſus Chriſt did. For *Matthew* and *John* were contiually about him, attending perſonally upon him, Eye-witneſſes of all his Actions; eſpecially the latter, who was admitted

admitted into his Privacies, ſo that no Miracle is ſaid to have been done at any time out of the common View, but what *John* was a conſtant Eye-witneſs of. And if *Luke* and *Mark* were not ſuch Attendants upon Chriſt himſelf, as the others were, yet the leaſt that is ſaid of them, is, that the one was converſant with *Paul*, who had as certain Information of all things as the reſt of the Apoſtles had; and that the other was converſant with *Peter*, who was allowed the ſame Priviledge which *John* enjoyed, and was continually one of thoſe three ſpecial Favourites, who were privy to the Lord Jeſus his more ſecret Actions.

2. This ſhort account being given of all theſe Writers Knowledge, the next thing to be ſhewed to make their Teſtimony ſufficiently credible, is, their great Intergity, which will ſoon appear to any reaſonable Man that will but conſider, 1. *Firſt*, The Impartiality. 2. And then the Simplicity that is obſervable in their Writings.

1. The Evangeliſts have given us an Impartial Account of the Obſcurity of Chriſt's

Chriſt's outward Condition; of the Meanneſs of his Diſciples Quality and Fortunes, of their Natural Inabilities, of the Dulneſs of their Underſtandings, of the ſlowneſs of their Hearts to believe; of their Infirmities and Faults, and particularly, of the Treachery of one Apoſtle, and of the ſhameful Lapſe of another. There are none of thoſe things concealed, which Men of Art and Partiality would hardly have made known. Nay, it is obſervable of *Mark*, that though he was *Peter's* great Attendant in the Execution of his Miniſtry; yet in relating the Story of *Peter's* denying his Maſter, he tells it as plainly as *Matthew* doth, with this little difference, that he doth not take ſuch affecting notice of his Repentance, as the other doth. For, whereas St. *Matthew* ſaith, *That he wept bitterly*; St. *Mark* ſaith, only *He wept*; as if he leſſened his Sorrow after an humble, modeſt manner, in reſpect to *Peter*, whoſe *Amanuenſis* he then was. An inſtance that ſhews, That if there was any Partiality in theſe Writers, it was in this, That they did not ſay enough of one anothers Virtues.

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Such Impartiality is ſeen throughout the Hiſtory written by *Moſes*. For therein he ſets down, not only the Poverty of his beginnings, but even the Faults and Miſcarriages he had been guilty of, and how angry God was for them. He relates as well the Crimes, as the Infirmities of his Anceſtors, all along from *Noah*, down to the Twelve Patriarchs; and among them, he particularly notes the Perfidiouſneſs and Cruelty of his great Grandfather *Levi*, when he and *Simeon* trick'd the *Sechemites* out of their Lives and Fortunes; for which Inhumanity their Father *Jacob* ſet a Curſe upon them, which *Moſes* has very faithfully recorded in *Gen.* 43. In ſhort, Whereas Partial Hiſtorians are wont to ſeek themſelves a Name, by favouring, and many times by flattering the Parties they belong to, *Moſes* ſpared not his own Nation; But hath left the World a long and laſting Account of the Follies, the Infidelity, the Murmurings, the Ingratitude, the Apoſtacies, together with the perverſe and incorrigible Temper of that People, the *Jews*; neither concealing, nor excuſing, nor extenuating their Provocations; his great Deſign being to

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ſet forth the Glory of God's Truth and Goodneſs; who ſet his love upon them, and choſe them, not becauſe they were better, or more in number than any People, (for they were the feweſt of all People, and a Rebellious People) but becauſe the Lord loved them, and becauſe he would keep the Oath which he had ſworn unto their Fathers.

2. To demonſtrate yet further the Integrity of *Moſes* and the Evangeliſts, who ſpeak of ſuch Miracles done, let us conſider, *Secondly*, their great Simplicity of Mind, without any mixture of Siniſter or Self-deſigns. Men are not wont to tell Tales for nothing. 'Tis either Vanity, or ſome private Intereſt, which is the end and drift of Impoſtors. And what could *Moſes* propoſe to himſelf by telling ſtories, which the *Egyptians* and *Jews* were ſo eaſily able to contradict, if thoſe Miracles had not been done among them? Or, what advantage can Men think he aimed at, when at the ſame time he ſpake ſo hardly of thoſe People, from whom alone thoſe advantages were to be expected, if any advantage at all had been ſought for? Nay, when he let thoſe advantages

tages go, which he had already in his hands? Whereas Men in Power endeavour to keep their Authority up, and to tranſmit it to their Poſterity, *Moſes* was content to let all that Power dye with him, wherewith he was veſted when he govern'd the whole *Jewiſh* Nation. He appointed *Joſhua* to ſucceed him in his Civil Authority. The great Dignity and Advantages of the Prieſthood, he diſpoſed of to his Brother *Aaron* and his Sons. As for his own Children, he left them in Subjection to the Prieſts, to officiate under them in the ordinary and mean Miniſtrations of the Tabernacle, not alloting them one foot of Land amongſt all their Kindred: All which ſhews, that from the beginning to the end, *Moſes* deſigned nothing but the Honour of God, and the Common good of his People: And that no Honour or Intereſt of his own could poſſibly ſway, or tempt him to violate his Integrity.

And what could the four Evangeliſts propoſe to themſelves, that ſhould move them to deceive the world, and make their Relations incredible, or ſuſpected? Honours they could not aim at, unleſs men think it an Honour to be Diſho-

neſt: Nor could Intereſt tempt them to impoſe fictions on mens Belief, when they were ſure beforehand to receive nothing in this world but Hardſhip, Perſecutions, and Death, for their Reward. Very poor encouragements for men to invent and ſpread abroad idle Stories: Or, if it be ſaid, that 'twas for the Credit and Propagation of their Religion; they muſt be thought the oddeſt men in Nature, that would coin Fictions for the ſake of a Religion they believed to be falſe; and yet they could not have believed otherwiſe of it, if they had not known it to have been confirmed by Miracles; for they were the only things that could give Evidence of its Truth beyond all Contradiction.

3. This I have ſaid to ſhew, that however ſome Irreligious Men have the confidence to deſpiſe the Scripture-account of Divine Miracles; to common human Reaſon it appears ſufficiently credible, from the certain Knowledge, and manifeſt Probity of the Writers; and conſequently, that we have as fair Evidence of the Reality of Miracles (in that reſpect) as can be had of any other matter of Fact that has been done

done in former Ages. To which let us add, in the next place, this third ground of Credibility; *viz.* that others, who had reaſon to know, and were able to know the truth of the matter, were ſufficiently ſatisfied of the certainty of it.

Here again we muſt return to *Moſes*; and *Firſt*, it is obſervable, that the account he gives of Miracles done by him, has continually paſt through a long ſucceſſion of Ages, uncontradicted; which is an Argument, that the Inquiſitive and Knowing men in moſt Nations were well ſatisfied of the Reality of the matter: For, as the Moſaick Writings contain the moſt Ancient Records that are extant in the world, ſo they ſeem to have been peruſed by the moſt Ancient Philoſophers and Hiſtorians; becauſe the things related in them were ſpoken of, and own'd generally by the whole Heathen world; though ſometimes not without a mixture of Poetical Fables; as, the Creation of the Univerſe; the Sanctity of the Sabbaths; the Story of the Deluge, and of the Ark; the Right of Circumciſion, and the like; as the Learned *Grotius* hath particularly ſhew'd in his Firſt Book of the Truth of Chriſtianity. It is very probable, that the

general belief of theſe things ſprang from the general perſuaſion which prevailed in the world, of thoſe Signs and Wonders that *Moſes* had ſhew'd, that made him ſo great a Perſon in the Eſteem of Mankind. There were thouſands ready to have diſproved the Relation, if the Works had not been done; nor is it in the leaſt likely, that of ſo many Neighbouring Nations round about the *Jews*, which mortally hated the *Jews* and their Religion, none would have diſcovered the Impoſture, had they not been ſatisfied, that what *Moſes* had written, was true. The Honour of having ſuch great things done for them in the eyes of the world would have been thought too much for a deſpiſed, hated People to have gone away with.

2. But, *Secondly*, inſtead of Contradicting *Moſes*'s Hiſtory, the moſt Ancient Writers among the *Egyptians* and *Greeks*, did own his Greatneſs: Inſomuch, that the old *Egyptians* would have appropriated him to themſelves, pretending that he was of *Egyptian* Parentage, and a Prieſt of *Heliopolis*, by name *Ozarſiph*, changing his name afterwards to *Moſes*. Some indeed of the other Heathens, as *Apuleius*, and *Numenius*

nius the *Pythagorean*, reckon him among the old Magicians, and in particular, among *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the famous Magicians of *Pharaoh*; but all lookt upon him as a very wonderful Perſon, by reaſon of the Plagues he brought upon *Egypt*.

3. And then, *Thirdly*, as for the *Jews*, nothing can be more clear, than that their whole Nation have all along acknowledg'd the truth of the Miracles done by *Moſes*. For their whole Conſtitution was founded upon the Credit of his Divine Authority; and that depended upon the Credit of his Miracles: And had any of them been unſatisfied in that point, thoſe Rebels who roſe up againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, alledging that they took too much upon them, would have alledged that they pretended too much alſo; a great deal more than what was true: Nor could thoſe People, who time after time Revolted from *Moſes*'s Law, have had ſuch another Plea for their Apoſtacies, as this would have been, that the Authority of the Law-giver was not confirmed by Miracles, as 'twas believed.

I have ſaid thus much of *Moſes*, to confront ſome in our days, who have taken the confidence to deride the Wri-

tings which go under *Moſes*'s Name, and the Miracles ſaid to have been wrought by him, that thereby they may with the greater boldneſs deny the Exiſtence of God; though, if Men will take the evidence given of any matters of Fact done at a great diſtance of time from them, it is impoſſible to find better evidence of any matters, than there is of theſe; of the certainty whereof, thoſe who had Reaſon to know, and were able to know, were fully ſatisfied.

I go on now, in the next place, from the ſame Conſideration to prove the Reality of thoſe Miracles which the Evangeliſts aſcribe to Jeſus Chriſt. And who could think themſelves more concern'd to enquire into the truth of them, than thoſe great Men, who made it their buſineſs to oppoſe his Religion? And yet, that many notable Miracles had been done by him, and by his Apoſtles after him, was manifeſt to all that dwelt at *Jeruſalem*; and they could not deny it. All that they had to ſay for their Infidelity, was, that Chriſt did thoſe wonderful Works by the help of the Devil; but matter of Fact they own'd. Hence it was, that ſoon after the Lord went out of the

the World, divers pretended to a power of Miracles, ſuch as *Simon Magus*, the *Gnoſticks*, and eſpecially *Appollonius Tyanæus*; that they might draw People off from the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity upon the ſame Motives which had induced them to embrace it. Thoſe times abounded with Magicians and Sorceres; who, though they could not deny the Works which Jeſus Chriſt had done, yet uſed all their Arts to leſſen and diſparage them, by pretending to do the like. Our Saviour had foretold his Diſciples, That *falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets would ariſe, and would ſhew great ſigns and wonders, inſomuch that (if it were poſſible) they would deceive the very elect*, Matth. 24. 24. Accordingly St. *Paul* ſpeaking of that ſet of Seducers, in the Singular Number, as the Man of Sin, ſaith, That *his coming was after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders*; that is, with wonders that ſerved to confirm and give teſtimony to falſe Doctrines, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 9. All theſe Appearances were ſo many Imitations of the Works of Jeſus, intended by thoſe men to deceive, who try'd to counterfeit things which they durſt not contradict, for fear of be-

ing contradicted themſelves by all the World. Nor did thoſe bitter Adverſaries to Chriſtianity in after-times, *Celſus* and *Julian*, preſume to diſown the Miracles of Chriſt; for they acknowledg'd, as other Heathens did, that he cured the Blind and the Lame; but to keep the force of this Argument from working upon mens minds, they reviled his Actions, as though they were done, not by any Divine Power, but by Arts of Magick, after his return out of *Egypt*, where they pretended he had learned his Skill. Briefly; In the Ages which were neareſt to our Saviour's, all ſorts of knowing Men acknowledg'd the Miraculous things that had been wrought by Him and his Followers: And had ſome Scepticks of our days lived then, even *Jews* and *Pagans* would in that point have accuſed their Infidelity from notoriety of fact which was unqueſtionable.

Orig. *cont.* Celſ. *lib.* 1. *p.* 30.

4. And yet there is one Conſideration more, that gives further Evidence of the truth of thoſe Miracles which *Moſes* and Jeſus Chriſt did; *viz.* That things of great and publick concernment were the conſequents of them; than which no ſtronger evidence can be given,

given, or deſired, of any matter of fact that ever was done in the world. There cannot poſſibly be a better proof that there were formerly Wiſe and Good Men in *England*, than the Government they eſtabliſhed, and the Laws they have left us. Our whole Conſtitution is founded upon their Actions; and the Polity we are under, ſhews what Kings and Parliaments they were, and what they have done, though the Men are long ago dead. So doth the ſtate of Judaiſm and the frame of Chriſtianity ſhew what *Moſes*, and what Chriſt did. All on each hand is built upon the Miracles which were done by the one and the other; and to ſay at laſt, there were no ſuch things, is to accuſe all their Diſciples of the higheſt madneſs, for following their Inſtitutions without Grounds or Reaſon; a cenſure that is too hard to be given of ſo great a part of Mankind, who think they have the greateſt Reaſon in the world for their Profeſſion. *Moſes* his buſineſs was, to form the whole Nation of the *Jews* into a Commonwealth, diſtinct from all other Societies of Men; to give them peculiar Laws; to preſcribe them a peculiar Form

Form of Religion; to bring their Necks under an heavy yoke; under a ſort of diſcipline, that was the moſt ſtrict, the moſt cumberſome, and laborious: And how can we think that a froward People, juſt delivered out of one Bondage, would preſently have ſubmitted to another (nay, a Bondage which they thought was to laſt for ever), had they not ſeen ſuch ſigns and wonders done before their eyes, as plainly argued that their Lawgiver came to them by immediate Commiſſion from God? Or how can we conceive, that their Poſterity, who groan'd ſo often under the Curſes which *Moſes* had left them, would have endured the ſeverities of ſuch a Taskmaſter, had they not well known that his Authority over them was atteſted from Heaven? Nay, How is it imaginable, that the *Jews* at this day ſhould not yet depart from *Moſes*, but ſtick to him to death, and will undergo any ſufferings, rather than leave him, though their Religion (as diſtinct from Chriſtianity) hath no inward natural Goodneſs to commend it, no human Power without to ſupport it; and though they themſelves be the moſt igno-

ignominious hated People in the world? The Reaſons of all this muſt be drawn from thoſe ſtrong aſſurances the *Jews* have always had, That to erect their Polity, and to eſtabliſh their Religion, *Moſes* did ſuch Works as were out of the Power of all Art and Nature, and plain tokens that he acted in the Name of God, and by the Authority of God.

And then as for the Chriſtian Inſtitution, it hath been long ago Received and Profeſſed up and down in the world, though it met with, and indeed carried in its nature ſuch vaſt and manifeſt diſcouragements, as could never have been conquer'd, had not Chriſt ſhewed the Neceſſity and Divinity thereof by Miracles. A Religion, whoſe Author died a moſt reproachful Death: A Religion, that layeth hard Reſtraints upon mens natural Deſires, and binds them to acts of Self-denial and Mortification: A Religion, that makes People prefer future Expectations before all preſent Enjoyments, and wait till the day of Judgment for their full Reward. A Religion, that is attended with Sorrows and Sufferings, and expoſeth its Profeſſors to Death it ſelf,

ſelf, for the ſake of a good Conſcience: In ſhort, a Religion, that brings with it all the ſeeming diſadvantages and diſcouragements that can be offered to Fleſh and Blood. And yet notwithſtanding all inconveniences, this Religion, where-ever it hath been Preach'd, hath continually prevailed over the hearts of all Teachable Men in the world; of which no other rational account can be given, but this, That the Author and Finiſher of our Faith proved his Authority, and confirmed all his Laws and Doctrines by working Miracles by the finger of God. *The works that he did in his Father's name, they bore witneſs of him*, Joh. 10. 25. For all people knew that he was a Teacher come from God, becauſe no man could have done thoſe Miracles that he did, except God had been with him, *Joh.* 2. 3. So that Miracles were the foundation of every man's Faith and Obedience; the great Reaſons which Congregated all people into that Body which we call the Church; and which ſtill holds them firm together againſt all the Hardſhips and Storms that can be brought upon them. The Chriſtian Church is a ſtanding, viſible Monument of our Saviour's

Saviour's Miracles, as the *Jewiſh* State was of the Miracles wrought by *Moſes*; and both of them are Monuments of ſuch vaſt and publick conſequence, as could never have been erected without them; much leſs could they have ſtood againſt all Winds and Weather. And after all, to imagine (as ſome do) that no ſuch Divine Supernatural Effects were ever done, is to ſay, That the greateſt part of the World have been all along ſo many ſtark Fools; a Character which we think more peculiarly belongs to thoſe who ſay in their hearts, There is no God.

Conſidering what a difficult and hazardous Office the firſt Preachers of Chriſtianity had to diſcharge, How, think ye, was it poſſible for them to undertake it with ſuch readineſs, to perform it with ſuch vigour, and to go through it with ſuch conſtancy and chearfulneſs, notwithſtanding ſo much oppoſition, had they not been abundantly convinced of the truth of their Religion by Miracles, which they ſaw with their own eyes? And conſidering what vaſt importance the Chriſtian Religion is declared to be of; and how directly oppoſite it is

to

to the natural Inclinations of corrupt Mankind, and how it was diſcountenanc'd and hated by *Jews* and Heathens in the beginning; How can we think it poſſible for it to have been received ſo generally and unexpectedly in the World, had not inquiſitive Men, who had the faireſt advantages of knowing matters of Fact, been fully ſatisfied, That the mighty Miracles reported to have been done by Jeſus, were true? Men cannot think theſe things poſſible, but either they muſt believe, that people in thoſe days had loſt all their Senſes; or make us now believe, that they themſelves have utterly loſt their own.

The deſign of all this is to ſhew, That there is as convincing and ſtrong Evidence, that True, Divine Miracles have been wrought, as can rationally be expected of any thing which hath been done in former times; becauſe no matter of Fact whatſoever can poſſibly be capable of ſtronger proof. In caſes of this nature, the utmoſt that can be expected, is Moral Certainty; when the Evidence is ſo fair, that no reaſonable man can have juſt cauſe to doubt of the truth of the matter; and that Evidence

Evidence muſt be from Teſtimony, becauſe it is impoſſible for us to know any thing which is gone and paſt, but by information from others; and when that Information is ſo full, that to unprejudiced Underſtandings the thing ſeems unqueſtionable, it is as much as any reaſonable man can deſire. Since therefore it appears by indubitable Teſtimony, that thoſe perſons, who are ſaid to have done Miracles, were once actually living in the World; ſince it appears that the Hiſtory of thoſe Miracles is ſufficiently credible, and is confirmed by the collateral Teſtimony of thoſe, who were both capable of knowing, and deeply concern'd to know the Truth of that Account: And, laſtly, ſince ſuch publick Settlements and Conſtitutions followed upon the Credit of thoſe Miracles, as plainly argued a firm and general Belief, or rather Knowledge of them, and could never have been brought about without them: Since, I ſay, all theſe grounds of Credibility do appear, to give evidence to the truth of Miracles formerly done; it ſeems unconceivable, how ſtronger or clearer evidence can be given of any matter of Fact, or of any Hiſtory that is now in the World.

2. Let

2. Let us conſider next the ſecond Evaſion; That ſuppoſing ſome wonderful things to have been done in former Ages, yet this is no more an Argument of the truth of a God's Exiſtence, than it is of the truth of Idolatry; becauſe Idolaters themſelves have pretended to Miracles, to vouch for their Religion. And conſidering how inconſiſtent, and impoſſible it would be for a Deity to act for, and againſt it ſelf too, therefore Men of Atheiſtical minds conclude, That thoſe wonderful Works which have gone under the name of Divine Miracles, have been really nothing but Art and Impoſture.

Now for the ſolving of this ſeeming difficulty, I ſhall conſider two Things:

1. *Firſt*, Matter of Fact.
2. *Secondly*, The Weakneſs of theſe Mens reaſoning from it.

1. *Firſt* then, that I may carry a fair and impartial Hand, it is granted, that many ſtrange and extraordinary things are ſaid to have been done by Men of a falſe Religion. For *Moſes* himſelf

himſelf tells us what the Magicians did in *Egypt* before his own face. Jeſus Chriſt told his Diſciples, that many falſe Teachers would come in a little time with Signs and Wonders to deceive (if it had been poſſible) the very Elect. To verify that Prediction, divers Eccleſiaſtical Writers tell us of the Wonders done by *Simon Magus*, and his Followers, ſoon after the Lord's Aſcenſion into Heaven. Others tell us of the Blind and the Lame being cured by the Heathen Emperor *Veſpaſian*; and of a Whetſtone being divided into two by a Razor, at the Command of *Accius Navius*; and of ſeveral Prodigious things done by *Apollonius Tyanæus*, whom the Pagans matched with Jeſus Chriſt for doing Miracles. And every body knows what Accounts of Miracles have been given by the Church of *Rome*, in defence of that part of their Religion, wherein they have moſt ſcandalouſly departed from True, Primitive Chriſtianity. Conſidering therefore what an heap of Stories there is, whereof ſome are related by Sacred Writers, and ſome others by Men of Probity and Temper (though abundance of Fictions hath been vended among them) it muſt be allowed,

that many Wonderful Works have been done by Idolaters.

But then, *Secondly*, This can be no Plea for the truth of Idolatry; becauſe how wonderful ſoever thoſe Works have ſeemed, they were not in themſelves Divine Miracles. We muſt diſtinguiſh between Miracles in Appearance, and Miracles in Reality. By Miracles in Appearance (which ſhould rather be called Wonders and Signs) I underſtand, not mere Impoſtures, or Deluſions of mens outwards Senſes, but ſuch Real Effects as may ſeem to be done by the extraordinary and immediate Power of God, when indeed they are not. That ſuch things are poſſible to be done, is clear from *Deut.* 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. where God himſelf gave the *Jews* this Caution, *If there ariſe among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a ſign, or a wonder, and the ſign or the wonder come to paſs, whereeof he ſpake to thee, ſaying, Let us go after other gods (which thou haſt not known) and let us ſerve them; thou ſhalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your*

your ſoul. Ye ſhall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice; and you ſhall ſerve him, and cleave unto him; and that prophet or dreamer of dreams ſhall be put to death. We cannot conceive, that when God hath any where eſtabliſhed his true Worſhip, he will lift up his own hand to draw People away from it to Idolatry; and therefore when Signs or Wonders are ſhewed to that end, we may be ſure they are not Divine Miracles, or Effects that are altogether Supernatural: And yet 'tis manifeſt, that ſuch things may be done as are counterfeitings of God's hand, and *ſeem* to carry the ſignatures of his Power; for otherwiſe there would have been no reaſon for that charge given to the *Jews*, that they ſhould not hearken to ſuch a falſe Prophet, but put him to Death, though his Sign or Wonder came to paſs. Hence 'tis eaſie to conclude, That there are Miracles in appearance, which are not true ones: For God cannot act contrary to himſelf, by working one Miracle to Eſtabliſh his True Worſhip, and another to Deſtroy it; and therefore thoſe Men are infinitely miſtaken, who pretend, That if Miracles ar-

gue the Exiſtence of a Deity, they argue the truth of Idolatry alſo; for it cannot be proved that any one Divine Miracle was ever yet done to confirm and give credit to Idolatry; and therefore I deny that any Idolaters can with Truth or Reaſon pretend it.

Now here Two things may be demanded, which I ſhall conſider a little, becauſe they are pertinent to the point in hand, and may be very uſeful if rightly underſtood.

1. *Firſt*, What Natural Power Miracles in Appearance may be imputed unto, ſuppoſing they have been actually done.

2. And, *Secondly*, How we may be able to know and diſtinguiſh ſuch Appearances from works which were ſtrictly and properly Miraculous.

1. *Firſt*, What Natural Power Miracles in Appearance may be imputed unto, ſuppoſing they have been actually done? This is no very difficult Propoſal, either to thoſe *Pagans* who own the Exiſtence of Demons; or to us Chriſtians who read of Angels Good and Bad; all under the Government of

of a Supreme Glorious Being, the Father of Spirits. But to the Scepticks of our Age, it will ſeem odd to ſpeak of theſe things, becauſe they acknowledge not the Exiſtence of any thing that is not Material and obvious to Senſe; and therefore explode the Belief of all Spiritual Beings, both God and Angels. Theſe Men I muſt at preſent leave to be contradicted in this Point by all Mankind, conſidering that it is a Subject too far out of my way, and of ſo copious a nature, as to admit of a large Diſcourſe by it ſelf for the clearing of it. I take it for granted, that there is another world beſides this; and that that other world is Inhabited by Inviſible Beings, which by God's Permiſſion Intereſs themſelves in the Affairs of this. Which being ſuppos'd, How can it ſeem to any Reaſonable Men impoſſible for ſuch Spirits, what by the ſubtlety and active Faculties of their Nature, and what by their great Knowledge of things in Nature and Art, and what by their own long Experience in the world, to do (when God is not pleaſed to interpoſe or check them) many things which may ſeem Miraculous to us, though they be

wrought by their own Natural, Ordinary, and Limited Power? It is not hard for thoſe Beings to ſhew Signs and Wonders, by God's Permiſſion, though without the help of his immediate Hand. They can by their Natural Agility and Power carry a Body from place to place, as the Devil did our Saviour's own Body, with God's leave. They can modulate the Air ſo as to form a Voice in an Image, as the Angel made *Balaam*'s Aſs to ſpeak. They can by the Natural Vigour of their Faculties, as eaſily divide a ſtone, as a man can cut off the Branch of a Tree. By impreſſing a new Vigour upon the Animal Spirits, they can help the defect of Sight (when God pleaſeth) in one that is caſualy blind; though they cannot by any Natural Means help him to Eyes, who was born without them. By the uſe of many Natural Cauſes they may do Prodigies, as the Magicians did by their help in *Egypt*. In which inſtance, two things are obſervable: 1. That the Power of thoſe Spirits was reſtrained. For though they did ſome things extraordinary, very like unto the Miracles which *Moſes* had done with his Rod; yet when the Miracle of Lice came,

came, the Magicians could not do it; and therefore they confeſs, That that *was the finger of God*, Exod. 8. 18, 19. 2. That though they *brought* ſome Plagues upon *Egypt*, they could not *remove* any, for which reaſon the King ſought unto *Moſes* all along; a plain Sign, that they were evil Angels with whom the Magicians were then in Confederacy. Hence it appears, That very wonderful Signs have been ſhew'd, which look'd like true Miracles, and were in imitation of true Miracles, when they were not Works of an Almighty Hand, but the ordinary Effects of that natural, finite Power that is in Dæmons and Devils. To which alſo we may rationally impute thoſe Operations, for which thoſe Magicians preſently after Chriſt, and others after them were ſo famous among the Heathens; and more eſpecially thoſe, by which *Apollonius Tyanæus* got himſelf ſuch a Name in the World, if the ſtories told of him be true, which yet is very queſtionable; nor doth *Philoſtratus* himſelf who relates them, report them all as things certain, though he wrote with a great deal of Partiality. The like is to be ſaid of thoſe pretended Miracles we have been

told ſo much of for ſeveral Ages paſt by Men of the *Romiſh* Communion. Suppoſing ſome of thoſe things were true, I mean, really done (for he muſt have a moſt miraculous Faith, that can believe all, or but one half of them) it will by no means follow that they were Miracles in a proper ſenſe, or Effects purely Supernatural, above the power of all Second Cauſes. For though no Natural Cauſe in this viſible World could do them, yet may they be very well imputed to the ordinary Power of created Beings that are inviſible; and ſo they are to be ranked among the workings of Satan, whoſe coming is wont to be with Power, and Signs, and Lying Wonders, which God hath many times permitted, partly to prove and exerciſe the Faith of ſincere Profeſſors of Religion, and partly to puniſh thoſe who receive not the love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved; for which cauſe God doth ſend them ſtrong deluſions, ſo that they believe a Lye, 2 *Theſſ.* 2.

All this makes it evident, that ſuch pretended Miracles cannot poſſibly argue the Truth of Idolatry, though actually done by Idolaters, becauſe they are ſuffer'd to be done in way of Judgment upon

on perverſe and obſtinate people. However, this advantage is hereby gained, That thoſe Miracles in appearance (ſuch as they are) do argue the Exiſtence of a God. For if there are any inviſible Beings permitted to ſhew Signs and Wonders, vigorous in their Actings, and limited in their Power, it will follow that there is a Sovereign Being preſiding over them, that doth govern and command them, ſuffer or controul, chain or let them looſe, of his own pleaſure, and as the Reaſons of Providence require it.

But it will be ſaid, That this diſtinction between Miracles in Reality, and Miracles in Appearance, is vain, and to no purpoſe; for who can ſee the difference of the one from the other by the nature of the things themſelves, becauſe on each hand the works may be the ſame? And it is not enough to ſay, This was done by the Great Power of God, and that by the Natural Power of Infernal Spirits, when this doth not appear from the quality of the thing produced. As for inſtance; *Moſes* is ſaid to have turned his Rod into a Serpent, and then the Waters into Blood, and then to have brought up Frogs out of the River; and are not the *Magicians* ſaid to have done ſo too? Where

Where then is the difference in the works? And if there be no viſible difference in them, how doth it appear that there was a difference in the Powers which produced them? And ſo why may not all be concluded an Impoſture; and conſequently, no ſubſtantial Evidence of the Exiſtence of a God?

This now brings me to the ſecond Enquiry, How we may know and diſcern a true Miracle from a pretended one?

1. For the clearing whereof, it is, *Firſt*, granted, That they are not diſtinguiſhable by the viſible quality of the works themſelves, unleſs it be in ſome particular Inſtances, as the raiſing of the dead, the giving Eyes to one that was born blind, the multiplication of a few Loaves, and the like. In thoſe caſes, the very Nature of the Works ſhew the finger of God; for none but an Almighty Power could produce them; nor could any created finite Power pretend ever to have done the like. But where one Wonder reſembles another, and ſeems to anſwer another, there

2. *Secondly*, The difference is diſcoverable chiefly from the Neceſſity and Ten-

Tendency of the Operations. Indeed their Circumſtances and Manner of Production may go a great way to ſhew the finger of God, or the working of Satan; but I conceive a true Miracle may be moſt eaſily and beſt diſtinguiſh'd from a falſe one, 1. By the Importance of the Reaſons which make a Miracle neceſſary. 2. By the End and Scope to which it tendeth.

1. Firſt, When there is a true Neceſſity for Miracles. As 1. When a man pretends to come from God with ſpecial Authority and Commiſſion for ſome extraordinay Service; in that caſe a Miracle is neceſſary, to give evidence of his Commiſſion, and that he may be believed. Such extraordinary Power muſt be back'd with extraordinary Works to atteſt it; for otherwiſe people could not have ſufficient Arguments to own it; and 'tis inconſiſtent with the Divine Nature to require mens Submiſſion, and not juſtify, or ſet his Seal to that Authority which he binds them to ſubmit unto, but to leave them in a ſtate of Guilt, for rejecting that which he gave them not ſufficient reaſons to receive. 2. Miracles are neceſſary, when extraordinary

dinary Alterations are to be made in the world: As, when a ſolemn, peculiar Form of Divine Worſhip is to be firſt ſet up; or when a peculiar Form, that was eſtabliſh'd by Miracles, is to be removed and taken down, to make room for a different Form. For theſe things are of ſuch vaſt importance, that in caſes of this nature Men cannot be deceived, without running the greateſt hazards; and nothing under a Miracle can keep them from being impos'd on. Now, when in theſe neceſſary caſes Signs and Wonders are ſhew'd, we may conclude them to be Divine Miracles; but if there be no need at all of extraordinary Operations upon theſe accounts, ſuch as are pretended ought to paſs for works Diabolical; becauſe God is not wont (as they ſay) to ſet his Seal to a Blank, nor is it conſiſtent with his Majeſty and Wiſdom to uſe his Omnipotence in vain.

2. True Miracles may be diſtinguiſh'd from falſe ones by their ſcope and tendency. The Works of God are Glorious, not only for thoſe ſignatures of Power they carry with them, but alſo for that admirable Goodneſs and Wiſdom which is diſcernable in them all; becauſe

becauſe they always drive at the beſt and moſt important ends. And ſo we muſt reckon ſuch Miracles Divine, as tend to confirm Truths which come by Divine Revelation. For as ſuch Truths cannot be confirmed but by the God of Truth that Reveals them; ſo neither would they be atteſted by the Father of Lies, the Devil, did it lye in his Power to work a Miracle for the confirmation of them; becauſe nothing is more croſs then Truth is, to his intereſt in the world. 2. Such Miracles are to be accounted Divine, as tend to draw People off from the practice and love of Sin. For as ſuch Miracles are glorious manifeſtations of the Holineſs of the Divine Nature, ſo they ſerve to transform the Spirits of Men into the Divine Image; and conſequently, can be wrought only by the Finger of God. 3. Such Miracles as tend to preſerve the true Worſhip of One God by acts of ſingular Love and Reverence, and with an entire Reſignation of Heart and Soul; becauſe this is the great end of God's whole Oeconomy; and that which all Impoſtures hitherto have been intended to Defeat and Baffle. 4. In ſhort; Thoſe are to be looked upon

upon to be true Divine Miracles, which tend to the utter deſtruction of the Devil's Power and Works. Theſe cannot poſſibly be thought Diabolical operations; *for if Satan riſe up againſt himſelf and be divided, he cannot ſtand, but hath an end*, Mark 3. 26. All theſe things carry their own light with them, and by that light we may very eaſily diſcern and diſtinguiſh true Miracles from thoſe Impoſtures which have gone under that name in all times, both Ancient and Modern.

Next after *Moſes*, Jeſus Chriſt was the only Perſon publickly owned to have come from God upon an extraordinary Meſſage to the world. And in regard he intended to repeal the *Moſaical* Ordinances, and inſtead thereof to enact more Spiritual Laws, it was neceſſary for him to work Miracles, to ſhew his Authority for the founding of his Church, as *Moſes* had ſhewed his for building of the Tabernacle. And theſe were the noble ends of all Chriſt's Miracles, to ſeal the Truth of his Doctrines; that how Myſterious ſoever ſome of them might ſeem, they might be believed; for which reaſon he did no one Miracle before he began to Preach;

Preach; to reclaim Mankind from all manner of Vice and Immorality, or whatever is contrary to God's Nature, or reproachful to their own; to eſtabliſh Piety and Honeſty in the world; to teach men to lead Sober, Righteous, and Godly Lives in this world; to direct them how to Worſhip the only True God in Spirit and Truth; and to deliver not only the Bodies, but the Souls of all People from the Tyranny and Power of the Devil, whoſe buſineſs was to Captivate all Mankind, that they might walk on ſtill in darkneſs and blindneſs of Heart; which being the reaſons and ends of the Lord Jeſus his Miracles, we may be ſure, that thoſe reaſons having been once anſwer'd, and the ends ſufficiently ſerved, by himſelf, and his firſt Diſciples, there was no further need of Miracles. And therefore whatever Signs and Wonders have been ſhewed (ſuppoſing they were really effected) either by ſome *Pagans* immediately following the time of Chriſt, or by ſome *Romaniſts* in latter Ages, they are not to be reckoned Divine Operations, but ſo many Workings of Satan and his Inſtruments; which are ſo far from juſtifying, or giving

giving credit to their Ways and Profeſſions, that in fact they are a reproach to them; eſpecially ſince they have been done in prejudice to that Grave and Holy Religion which the Lord Jeſus confirmed; and were ſo manifeſtly intended for the promoting and encouragement of Superſtition, Vice, and downright Idolatry.

I have now ended this Point concerning Miracles, having diſcourſed the more largely upon it, that at the ſame time I might demonſtrate the Exiſtence of God, and likewiſe ſerve the intereſt of Chriſtianity; the truth whereof undeniably appears from this ſingle argument, That Jeſus Chriſt confirmed all his Laws and Doctrines by True Miracles. For this being once granted, it muſt neceſſarily follow, not only that there is a God, but moreover, that Jeſus Chriſt came from God, and that the Teſtimony which his Works gave of him, was Divine and Infallible; and conſequently, That we are bound at our utmoſt peril to Believe and Obey him: Which Conſideration being of ſuch vaſt moment, I thought my ſelf obliged to beſtow the more time and pains in clearing matter of Fact.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THE next extraordinary Occurrence I mentioned, as a demonſtration of God's Exiſtence, is Prophecy; that is, the Foretelling of ſome Future Events, which depended on ſuch ſecret and remote Cauſes, as none but an Omniſcient Being could poſſibly diſcern afar off.

That you may underſtand this matter diſtinctly and clearly:

1. I do not here by Events mean ſuch things as have come to paſs by the neceſſary and natural Operation of ſecond Cauſes. For where a thing depends upon neceſſary Cauſalities, any man that can diſcover the order, and ſeries, and application of the Cauſes, may eaſily foreſee and predict the conſequent; as a skilful Aſtronomer can foretel Eclipſes of the Moon and Sun. For thoſe glorious Creatures are under a conſtant Law, and their motions are Regular; ſo that a man who knows their Courſes, and by the Uniformity of them, perceives when an Opake Bo-

dy will fall between one of thoſe Luminaries and our Eyes, can diſcover long before-hand when the Light will be intercepted, and fail in our Hemiſphere. But by future Events are underſtood contingencies, or thoſe iſſues, the Cauſes whereof are not yet in being; or at leaſt are ſo occult, remote, and uncertain, that they are not diſcernible by any limited Underſtanding, in regard that they depend upon the caſual concurrence of Second Cauſes, or upon the Arbitrarious Power of Mens Wills; or upon the uaccountable hits of Fortune; or upon ſuch ſtrange reſults, as look like ſo many ſecret over ruling determinations of Deſtiny: As, What Great Men will ariſe Two or Three Ages hence, (if the world ſhall continue ſo long)? What Revolutions there will be then in States and Empires? What the Conditions of the Church will be? What Wars will happen? What will become of our Poſterity and of the Fortunes we tranſmit to them? In ſhort, How the world will go? Theſe things, and the like, are altogether Accidental, and therefore muſt needs be Uncertain; nor can they come within the reach of finite Beings, any more

more than the cloſe of the world, or the Day of Judgment can be known, or predicted by us.

2. *Secondly*, By Foretelling future Events, is meant true and infallible Prediction, in contradiſtinction to Conjecture, or probable Fore-knowledge. There is in all Intellectual Beings a Preſaging Power, and the Perception before-hand muſt be according to the condition and quality of the Cauſe, from which that Perception ſprings and is gathered. If the Cauſe be Neceſſary and Natural, the Foreknowledge is Certain; but if it be only Caſual and Fortuitous, it can amount to no more but a probable Opinion. No Creature, how Intelligent ſoever it be, can of it ſelf infallibly foreſee what Chances and Accidents will fall out hereafter; by reaſon that the immediate Cauſes are ſuppos'd as yet not to be Exiſtent, or at leaſt to be a great way off in the dark. Therefore when a contingent Event is clearly Foreſeen, and infallibly Predicted at a diſtance, ſo that after a long tract of time, the thing, how Caſual ſoever it was, exactly anſwers the Prediction, we muſt conclude, That the Being which Foreſaw and Foretold it, is of a more

Perfect Underſtanding than any Creature can pretend to.

If then it be made appear, That many contingent things have long before they happened, been certainly Foreknown, truly Predicted, and at laſt in Fact have come to paſs accordingly, this muſt be a Demonſtration of the Exiſtence of a moſt Perfect Being, that is, a Deity. For all Human Preſaging of accidental Events at a great diſtance from us, is at beſt but Gueſſing, which commonly ends in vaſt miſtakes; ſo ſhort-ſighted are our Underſtandings, and our capacities ſo very narrow! And as for thoſe Intellectual Creatures which Inhabit the other world, and traverſe up and down in this, though by reaſon of the innate Quickneſs and Sagacity of their Faculties, the long Experience they have had of Human Affairs, the great Inſight they have thereby into all things here below; the Agility of their Nature which enables them to be privy every where to Mens Counſels and Actions, and the continual Obſervations they cannot but make from the Diſappointments or Succeſſes of Mens Deſigns; though, I ſay, by means of

of theſe ſingular advantages, they are qualified to give, beyond expreſſion, far better Judgment of future Events, eſpecially near at hand, than the Wiſeſt and moſt Reaching Men on Earth; yet is their Knowledge limited notwithſtanding: So that without the Aſſiſtance of Divine Revelation, their Foreſight of Contingencies, eſpecially of ſuch as are remote and do depend upon a ſeries of diſtant Cauſes, can be but only Conjectural. Hence it was, that thoſe ancient Southſayers and Augurs among the Heathens, who uſed the help of Demons in their manifold Superſtitious ways of Prognoſticating, were often miſtaken, even in very probable caſes, and when Events were hard by. And 'tis commonly obſerved of thoſe old Oracles, who were ſo much conſulted by the Idolatrous Pagans upon any emergencies which ſeemed difficult, that though thoſe officious deluding Spirits were wont (till Chriſt's time) to give People Anſwers out of Holes and Caves, yet, to ſave *Apollo*'s Credit, they were wont to wrap up thoſe Reſponſes, in equivocating and doubtful Terms, that were capable of various Conſtructions, as the thing conſulted about

ſucceeded or fail'd. Indeed Good Angels have not deceived Men; and therefore their foreſight muſt be acknowledged to have been better grounded, and of a further and clearer reach. But yet by reaſon of thoſe finite and (comparatively) ſcanty meaſures of Knowledge, which are connatural to all Created Beings, though Exalted and Glorious, to make all their Predictions certain and infallible, they have always, by the neceſſity of their Nature, ſtood in need of ſpecial Revelation and Commiſſion from a Superior Being, whoſe Preſcience touches all intermediate and proximate Cauſes, and all contingent, probable, poſſible Events, though never ſo far removed from created Underſtandings. Therefore if in this caſe matter of fact be true, that any Creatures, Men or Angels, have acted after ſuch a Prophetical manner, as to have Foretold things Future, things which Natural Cauſes did not neceſſarily produce, things which could not have been foreſeen, but through a continued train and ſucceſſion of Accidents, and through many Circumſtances in themſelves dubitable and uncertain; nay, ſome things which depended, not ſo much

much upon Natural or Moral Cauſes here below, as upon an over-ruling Power, which ſome have called by the Name of Fate; whereby others underſtand the Abſolute Decrees and Pleaſure of Heaven: I ſay, if things of theſe kinds have been certainly and infallibly Predicted, it is a plain Argument of the Exiſtence of an Omniſcient Being, becauſe none but an Omniſcient Being, or a Deity could Foreknow them; none but an Almighty Being could Direct and Govern them. And therefore this is claim'd as a peculiar Prerogative of the Deity, *to declare the things that are coming, and ſhall come*, Iſa. 44. 7. an Argument which the Prophet there uſed to ſhew, that the Idols which the Apoſtate *Jews* Worſhipp'd, were not Real Deities.

This then being ſo evident and undeniable, the whole matter will turn upon this main point, Whether there have been at any time ſuch Predictions as theſe. For the clearing whereof we muſt refer our ſelves to thoſe Books which have been all along of ſo great Authority with Jews and Chriſtians, ſince they were firſt compiled; eſpecially to thoſe Books, which we commonly call

the *Old Teſtament*: Books of ſuch Venerable Antiquity, that the very laſt of them was written Four hundred years before the Birth of Chriſt; that is, above Two thouſand years ago; and the firſt of them contains the moſt Ancient Hiſtory that is in the World; and is at leaſt Three thouſand two hundred years old. Though in ſeveral other Writings, which are but of vulgar note, we meet with divers Accounts of Prophecies; yet becauſe theſe are the moſt Ancient, the moſt Authentick, and are believed to have been penned by Prophets themſelves, I ſhall take notice only of ſuch as we find in them; conſidering thoſe Writers now, not as Men divinely inſpired, but as fair Hiſtorians only; the Credit whereof, there is no ſober, modeſt man, but will be aſhamed to deny them.

Now here I might fill a large Volume, were I minded to write a particular Account of the moſt Intelligible Predictions we find throughout the Scriptures, and of the Accompliſhment of them. But 'twill be enough for me to take notice only of Three ſorts.

1. Such as relate to the Great, Ancient Empires.

2. Such

2. Such as relate to Jeſus Chriſt.

3. Such as relate to ſome Memorable and Remarkable Events after his departure out of the world.

1. *Firſt*, Such Predictions as relate to the Great, Ancient Empires. Of which, the *Aſſyrian* Monarchy was the Firſt; and long before the Tranſlation of it to the *Medes* and *Perſians*, *Cyrus*, who was deſigned to tranſlate it, was mention'd by name, as God's Shepherd and Anointed, by *Iſaiah*; a Prophet of the *Jews*, who told them before-hand what great things God would do for *Cyrus*, and that *Cyrus* would perform all God's pleaſure, *Iſa.* 44, 45. Yet this was many years before ever *Cyrus* was born; Two hundred and ten years, ſaith *Joſephus*; who adds, That *Cyrus* having read that Ancient Prophecy concerning him, to expreſs his Thankfulneſs to God, gave the *Jews* leave to return home out of their Captivity, and to rebuild God's Temple at *Jeruſalem*; towards which he promiſed his own aſſiſtance. Joſ. *Antiq. lib.* 1. *c.* 1.

The *Jews* had then been Captives at *Babylon* about Seventy years; which ſore Judgment had been literally foretold them, together with the determinate Time

Time of it, by the Prophet *Jeremy*, Jer. 25. 11. *This whole land ſhall be a deſolation, and an aſtoniſhment; and theſe nations ſhall ſerve the king of Babylon ſeventy years.*

By the way let me obſerve, That *Jeremy* began his Prophecying in the Thirteenth year of that good Prince *Joſiah*, King of *Judah*: And that *Joſiah* by name had been foretold in the Reign of *Jeroboam*, as we find, 1 *Kings* 13. 2. And that Prophecy was by certain computation given about Three hundred and fifty years before the days of *Joſiah*.

But to go on: Towards the end of the Captivity at *Babylon*, *Daniel* interpreted *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Dream concerning the Great Image, the Head whereof was of fine Gold, the Breaſt and Arms of Silver, the Belly and Thighs of Braſs, the Legs of Iron, and the Feet part of Iron, and part of Clay. This Viſion was a Repreſentation of the Four Famous Empires, as we ſee by *Daniel*'s own Expoſition, *Dan.* 2. The Firſt Empire was that then in being, the *Babyloniſh*; repreſented by an Head of Gold, becauſe it was the moſt Conſiderable and Glorious of all the Four. As to the Three next, the Viſion was Prophetical; intended to ſhew the ſeveral

ral Succeſſions of them; and that the Latter would ſtill be inferior to the Former in Splendor and Dignity. Whereas therefore the *Babyloniſh* Empire was of Gold; the Second was to be of Silver; and that was the *Perſian* Empire; repreſented by Two Arms, becauſe it conſiſted of Two great People, the *Perſians* and *Medes*, that were to be united together into one State; and that under *Cyrus*, who would be related to both Nations; to the *Medes* by the Mother's ſide, and to the *Perſians* by his Father's. By the Third Kingdom is meant the *Macedonian*, or *Grecian* Empire, that was to be erected by *Alexander the Great*, upon his Signal Victories over the *Perſians*. This was repreſented by a Brazen Belly and Thighs, becauſe (as St. *Jerome* thinks) Braſs, of all Metals giving the greateſt ſound, was fit to ſet forth the Extraordinary Fame which would be ſpread over the world, not only of the *Greeks* Power and Fortune, but of their Eloquence alſo. The *Roman* Empire was to be the Fourth; and that was repreſented by Legs of Iron; becauſe, as Iron breaketh in pieces, and ſubdueth all things; ſo was the *Roman* Power to break and ſubdue all the Principalities which *Alexander* left to his Commanders, and their

their Succeſſors; and ſo would poſſeſs it ſelf of all the Riches and Glory of the Three former Empires. Nevertheleſs, how ſtrong ſoever the *Roman* Power was to be at the firſt founding of that Empire, in proceſs of time it would be impaired, weakned, and debaſed, like Iron mingled with Mire and Clay. Which St. *Jerome* obſerves was, when the ſtrength of *Rome* was ſo waſted by their long Wars, Foraneous and Civil, that they were forced upon many Occaſions to call in the Aid of Barbarous, Exotick People, which mixing themſelves with the Old *Roman* Blood, gave it an alloy, ſo that they loſt great degrees of their Ancient Strength and Honour.

This Succeſſion of the Empires thus predicted in the Second Chapter of *Daniel*'s Prophecy, we find foretold again in ſome other places, under other Repreſentations; but I inſtance in this only, becauſe it is moſt obvious to every ordinary Underſtanding. And now, whoever will take the pleaſure to examine ſome Humane Writers from *Herodotus* down to *Juſtin*, the Hiſtorian, may with infinite Satisfaction find, how exactly theſe Predictions were fulfilled: 1. By *Cyrus*'s getting the Power out of the hands of

of the *Babylonians*; then by *Alexander*'s getting it out of the hands of the *Perſians*; and then by the *Romans* wreſting it out of the hands of *Alexander*'s Succeſſors; and yet between the delivering, and the fulfilling of *Daniel*'s Prophecy, there paſſed a Flux of about Five hundred years; which doth manifeſtly argue the Exiſtence of God, who alone could at ſuch a diſtance of time ſo infallibly and particularly foreſee and predict Events, that were in themſelves ſo contingent and uncertan. That it looks like an Hiſtory, rather than a Prediction. To which purpoſe St. *Jerome* tells us of that great Blaſphemer of Chriſt, and his Religion, *Porphyry*, that reading the Book of *Daniel*, and finding how exactly conſonant the Events were to the Prophecy, he could not but acknowledge the truth of the account; but to evade the force of thoſe Arguments which the Chriſtians drew thence, he betook himſelf to this ſenſeleſs and abſurd Pretence, that the Book was not a Prediction written by *Daniel*, but rather a Narrative of things that were done long after *Daniel*'s time, and written by ſome body elſe in the days of *Antiochus Epiphanes*. *Proem. in Dan.*

2. There

2. There is another ſort of Predictions which relate peculiarly to Jeſus Chriſt; whom *Daniel* called before-hand, *Meſſiah the Prince*, *Dan.* 9. 25. Whereupon a very Learned Writer obſerves, That there is no other place of Scripture, whence the Church of *Iſrael* did or could aſcribe the Name of Chriſt and Meſſiah unto him they looked for, but only this of *Daniel*. For there is no other Prophecy in all the *Old Teſtament* beſides this, where that Name is directly given him, but only by way of Type; which makes it unqueſtionable, that the *Jews* underſtood this Prophecy of that Great and Eminent Perſon, whoſe coming into the World, together with all the remarkable Circumſtances which attended his Life and Death, were long before ſo particularly foretold by ſeveral Prophets, that thoſe Predictions are not capable of being fairly applied to any other Perſon; what arts ſoever ſome *Jews*, and other miſguided Men have uſed to wreſt them another way. That he was to be of the Seed of a Woman; or that he was to appear in the Nature, not of Angels, but Men. That of all Mankind he was to ſpring from the Loins of *Abraham*. That of *Abraham's* Poſterity, he was to deſcend

Mr. Mead, *B.* 3. *p.* 861.

ſcend only from *Iſaac*. That of all *Iſaac*'s Generation, he was to be of the Tribe of *Judah*. That of all that Tribe, he was to be of the Houſe and Lineage of *David*. That a Virgin of *David*'s Lineage was to conceive and bear him. That *Bethlehem* was to be the place of his Nativity. That he was to be a Prophet like unto *Moſes*, yet much above him. That he was to do Miracles. That he was to Preach good Tidings to the meek, and to bind up the broken-hearted. That he was to be a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief. That he was to be deſpiſed and rejected of Men. That one of his own Familiars, who ſhould eat of his Bread, would lift up his Heel againſt him. That he ſhould be ſold for thirty pieces of Silver. That he ſhould be led to the Slaughter like a Lamb. That he ſhould be numbred with the Tranſgreſſors. That his Garments ſhould be divided, and Lots caſt upon his Veſture. That Vinegar ſhould be given him to drink. That in the midſt of his Sufferings he ſhould be ſcoffed at, and reviled. That he ſhould make Interceſſion for Trangreſſors. That for the Sins of People he ſhould be ſmitten. That he ſhould make his Grave with the Rich.

That

That not one of his Bones ſhould be broken: And that his Soul ſhould not be left in Hell, nor his Body ſuffer'd to ſee Corruption. Theſe things were foretold of Jeſus Chriſt; and taking them altogether in a ſum, it is impoſſible for an Infidel, with any colour of Reaſon to apply them to any other but Jeſus Chriſt only.

But one of the moſt remarkable things, is, That the time of Chriſt's appearing in the World was ſo plainly foretold by ſome of the Prophets, that the Learned *Jews* found by their Calculations, that about the time when Jeſus Chriſt was born, the promiſed *Meſſiah* was to come. And hence it was, that at that Juncture they were all full of Expectations of him. Nor is it at all queſtionable, but the time ſo agreeing with the Predictions, they would joyfully and unanimouſly have received Jeſus Chriſt as the *Meſſiah*, had not his coming been in that mean and obſcure Condition, which was ſo great a ſurprize to thoſe People who expected the *Meſſiah* would have been like a *David*, or *Solomon*, to have gone in and out before them with all poſſible Pomp, Splendor, and Magnificence.

The Prophet *Haggai* mentioned the time of his Appearance more largely,

Hag.

Hag. 2. 7, 9. The Subſtance of which Prediction was, That the deſire of all Nations (that is, the *Meſſiah* or *Shiloh*) ſhould come while the Temple which was then a building, continued and was ſtanding; and that the Glory of that latter Houſe ſhould be greater than the Glory of the former, which had been at ſo vaſt an Expence, erected and finiſhed by King *Solomon*. Now this was fulfilled meerly by Chriſt's conſtant preſence at that Temple, ſome years before the Deſtruction of it by the *Romans*. For in reſpect of the Structure, and external Glory of it, it fell ſo very ſhort of the firſt, that when the ancient Men who had ſeen the firſt Houſe, ſaw the Foundations of the ſecond, *They wept with a loud voice*, as *Ezra* tells us, *Ezra* 3. 12. And beſides, the *Jewiſh* Rabbins confeſs, that five things were wanting to this Temple, which the former was honoured with as ſo many Signs of the peculiar Preſence of God's Majeſty at it. 1. The Urim and Thummim, or thoſe Stones upon the Breaſt-plate of the High Prieſt, whereby God was wont to reveal his mind. 2. The Ark of the Covenant; from which the King and the High Prieſt did ſometimes receive anſwers from God

by a clear and audible Voice. 3. The Fire that was wont to fall from Heaven, to devour the Sacrifice upon the Altar. 4. The *Shekinah*, or Divine Power, that was ſignified ſometimes by the Pillar of a Cloud, and by the Holy Oyl, wherewith the King and High Prieſt were wont to be anointed. And 5. the Spirit of Prophecy. Theſe glorious things being wanting at the ſecond Temple, whence could that great Glory predicted by *Haggai* proceed, but from the Preſence of Jeſus Chriſt? One that was the Brightneſs of his Father's Glory, and the Glory of his People *Iſrael*. One that was the true Urim and Thummim, that revealed his Father's Will plainly to the World. One that was the typified Ark of the Covenant, the Propitiatory by his own Blood. One that Baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Fire; the true Fire from Heaven, whereof the other was but a typical Repreſentation. And one who received not the Spirit by meaſure, but was anointed with the Oyl of gladneſs above his Fellows?

But the Prophet *Daniel* pointed out the time of his coming after a more cloſe and preciſe manner, *Dan.* 9. 24, 25, 26, 27. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people,*

people, and upon thy holy city, to finiſh the tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs, and to ſeal up viſion and prophecy, and to anoint the moſt holy. Know therefore, and underſtand, that from the going forth of the commandment to reſtore and to build Jeruſalem, unto the Meſſiah the prince, ſhall be ſeven weeks; and threeſcore and two weeks, (after that) *the ſtreet ſhall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threeſcore and two weeks ſhall Meſſiah be cut off, but not for himſelf; and the people of the prince that ſhall come, ſhall deſtroy the city, and the ſanctuary, and the end thereof ſhall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war deſolations are determined. And he ſhall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midſt of the week he ſhall cauſe the oblation and ſacrifice to ceaſe; and for the overſpreading of abominations, he ſhall make it deſolate, even until the conſummation, and that determined ſhall be poured out upon the deſolate.* As to the expoſition of this Prophecy, all Writers are agreed, that according to the language and cuſtom of the *Jews*, by a week is underſtood not ſeven days, but

ſeven years; that is, ſeventy times ſeven years, or four hundred and ninety years in all. And the plain ſenſe of the Prediction may be compriſed within theſe Obſervations, as far as it concerns my preſent purpoſe.

1. Firſt, That from the ſecond building of the Temple and City of *Jeruſalem*, to the laſt deſtruction of both, there was alotted the ſpace of four hundred and ninety years, to be computed from the time of the publication of an Edict by ſome *Perſian* King for this ſecond Building.

2. That within the compaſs of thoſe four hundred and ninety years, Sin ſhould be expiated; true, ſubſtantial Righteouſneſs, grounded upon eternal Reaſons, ſhould be preached; the old Prophecies ſhould be fulfilled; Meſſiah the Prince ſhould be cut off, and afterwards inſtated in his everlaſting Kingdom. The reſt of the Prediction relates to the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, of which I ſhall take notice by and by. Thus much of it is concerning the Advent, Life, Death, and Unction of the Meſſiah.

Now to lay aſide the various, perplexing Accounts given by inquiſitive men, touching the exact Impletion of every part

part of this Prophecy, theſe two things are very evident:

1. Firſt, That the rebuilding, and final devaſtation of the Holy Temple and City, was according to the time alotted, the ſeventy weeks of years. For though the *Jews* were permitted by *Cyrus* to return into their Land out of their Captivity, and to begin the reſtoration of the Temple, yet the great Edict, the ſucceſsful Commandment for the reſtoring and building *Jeruſalem*, was given by that *Perſian* King, called *Darius Nothus*, Ezra 6. And from the third year of his Reign, when the work of the Temple (by the incitement of *Haggai* and *Zachary* renewed the year before) was now confirmed by a new Edict from the King to be finiſhed, unto the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*, are exactly four hundred and ninety years; that is, ſeventy weeks of years fully complete, as a Learned Writer hath computed the time to my hands. Mede. B. 3. pag. 858, 859.

2. Secondly, It is moſt evident, that before the expiration of theſe four hundred and ninety years, while the Temple and City of *Jeruſalem* were yet ſtanding, Jeſus Chriſt was manifeſted in the fleſh; that he fulfilled all Righteouſneſs in his

own Perſon, and taught all others to live godly, righteouſly, and ſoberly in this preſent world; that he offer'd up himſelf upon the Croſs, a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the Sins of all men; that to him all the Prophets did bear witneſs, and in him their Prophecies did terminate; and that upon his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, he was exalted unto the right hand of God, and all Power was given him in Heaven and in Earth, according to *Daniel*'s Prediction.

And now to return to our Argument, How was it poſſible for *Daniel*, or for any other man, to have foretold theſe Events ſo exactly, and ſo long before, without immediate Revelation from a Divine, Omniſcient Being, who foreſaw, nay, fore-appointed the whole *ſeries* and courſe of theſe things from the beginning to the end? And conſequently, How is it poſſible for any man of common reaſon or ſenſe, to queſtion the Exiſtence of ſuch a Being, for theſe things could not depend upon any natural Cauſes. No, the Advent, Sufferings, and Glorifying of the Meſſiah, were purely the reſult of a Divine Decree; and therefore could not have been predicted or foreſeen, but by that Divine Being who had decreed all; and by

by whoſe determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge Jeſus Chriſt was delivered to the *Jews*, as St. *Peter* told them, *Acts* 2. 23.

3. The like is to be ſaid of thoſe other Predictions, which relate to ſome remarkable and memorable Events after Chriſt's departure out of the world, and they were chiefly theſe three. 1. The Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. 2. The Propagation of the Chriſtian Faith. And 3dly, the diſperſed and reproachful Condition of the *Jews*.

1. As *Daniel* foretold the Deſolations that would come upon *Jeruſalem*, ſo did the Meſſiah himſelf foretel, that *there ſhould not be left one ſtone of the temple upon another, which ſhould not be thrown down*, Matth. 24. 2. And a little further he ſaid, *When ye ſhall ſee the abomination of deſolation ſpoken of by Daniel the prophet, ſtand in* (or about) *the holy place, let them which be in Judea, fly to the mountains*, ver. 15, 16. This, by the way, ſhews that the computation of *Daniel*'s ſeventy weeks, is to be carried on to the time of *Jeruſalem*'s deſtruction; for there the four hundred and ninety years end, and not before; as we ſee by our Saviour's referring to that Prediction, when he ſpake

of that Deſolation. Theſe Predictions were accompliſh'd about forty years after the Meſſiah's Crucifixion, and in that Juncture the ſeveral parts of thoſe Predictions were anſwer'd to the full. Then the *Jews* ſaw the abomination of Deſolation which *Daniel* had ſpoken of, meaning the *Roman*, Heathen Armies, with the Heathen Figures, in their Military Banners, expanded about the Holy City. Then were the people of the Prince (that is, their Commander *Titus*) come to deſtroy the City and the Sanctuary. Then did *Titus* his Forces over-run the Land of *Judæa* like a Flood, and make it deſolate. Then was the Temple laid waſte, and the Oblations and Sacrifices which were wont to be in it, were made to ceaſe. And then was the Conſummation which *Daniel* foretold, or the End which was determined upon the Deſolate; namely, the utter overthrow of their whole Government both in Church and State; and then too was the Deſolation foretold by Jeſus Chriſt, not one ſtone left upon another, neither in the City of *Jeruſalem*; for, as *Joſephus* acknowledgeth, it was razed to the Foundations, and laid even with the Ground: Nor yet in the Temple; for, as our Learned Paraphraſt obſerves out of *Scaliger*,

Scaliger, as a full Completion of our Saviour's Prophecy, the very Foundations of the Temple were torn up by *Turnus Rufus* with a Plow-ſhare, ſo that no part of it Under-ground was left undiſſolved; not one ſtone left upon another. How could a clearer Argument be expected than that was, of the Exiſtence of an All-ſeeing, an All-powerful and Righteous God, who weighed the Sins of an hardned People, and by his determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge, made their Puniſhment then as plain as their Guilt had been, when with wicked hands they crucified the Lord of Life, and wiſh'd that his Blood might be upon them, and upon their Children.

2. But, *Secondly*, Beſides theſe Predictions which concern'd them, and were fulfilled in their Sufferings, there were others which had references to the Propagation of Chriſt's Religion. Chriſt himſelf had foretold, *That when he ſhould be lifted up from the earth, he would draw all men unto him*, Joh. 12. 32. And near Two thouſand years before that time, the Patriarch *Jacob* preſignified on his Death-bed, *That when Shilo ſhould come, to him the gathering of the people ſhould be*, *Gen.* 49. 10. which was not poſſible for *Jacob*,

Jacob, at ſuch a vaſt diſtance of time to ſay, or foreſee of himſelf; no more than 'twas poſſible for the Prophets in after-times, without Revelation from an All-knowing Being, to predict, as they did, *That all kings ſhould fall down before him; That all nations ſhould do him ſervice; That he ſhould ſtand for the people; That to him the Gentiles ſhould ſeek; That from the riſing up of the ſun to the going down of the ſame, his name ſhould be great among the Gentiles; That the Heathen ſhould be for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion.* All which Predictions proved in the Event moſt evidently true; notoriety of fact ſhews it; and yet the exact impletion of theſe Prophecies could never have been foreknown, as it was, but by a Supreme *Numen*, who knoweth all things; conſidering how unlikely it was, as things ſtood, for Chriſtianity to find univerſal ſucceſs and entertainment in the world; becauſe it was ſo oppoſite to mens Luſts and Pleaſures; the *Jews* were ſo hardned againſt it; the Pagan Religion, which Chriſtianity was intended to deſtroy, was ſo ſpread over the *Gentile* Nations, and ſo fixt by Laws: Princes were ſo ſet againſt it; the Devil uſed ſuch various methods to ſtop its progreſs;

greſs; and the Preachers of it were of themſelves ſo weak, and unable to carry it over the world; that without the Aſſiſtance of a Divine Power, it could not have prevailed over the hearts of people ſo univerſally, and in ſuch a conquering manner, notwithſtanding all Obſtacles which were in the way. But herein appeared the wonderful Conduct of Divine Providence, That the Government of the *Jews* being quite diſſolved upon the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, the Scepter then being utterly departed from *Judah*, and the Lawgiver from between his feet, *Shiloh* reigned with triumph and glory. As the *Jews* loſt ground, ſo Chriſt, whom they had crucified, got it; and a great deal more: So that in a very little time, not only multitudes of the *Jewiſh* Nation were Converts to Chriſtianity, but great Armies of People in the *Gentile* world, and in the moſt Barbarous Countries, were brought in obedience to Chriſt's Faith. And hereby the Ends of God's Providence were ſerved by the *Romans* themſelves; firſt by being his Inſtruments to captivate and ſubdue the wicked *Jews*; and then by being themſelves ſubdued to Jeſus Chriſt; ſo that where-ever the *Roman* Eagles flew, there Chriſt was a Conquerer by his Holy Spirit.

3. To

3. To which let me add, *Thirdly*, this one Obſervation more, concerning thoſe Predictions which relate to the Diſperſed and Reproachful Condition of the *Jews* ſince the Overthrow of their City and Government. As the Old Prophets had told thoſe People long before, what a ſad, miſerable Condition they would bring themſelves to at laſt; ſo Chriſt had foretold them in expreſs terms, *That upon the treading down of Jeruſalem, they ſhould be led away captive into all nations*, Luk. 21. 24. A Prediction which was literaly fulfilled as ſoon as they were conquer'd by *Titus* his Army. Many thouſands of them were carried away, divided, and ſcatter'd up and down in the world; where their wretched Poſterity inherit their Anceſtors Curſe to this day; leading ſtill a forlorn ſort of life; Vagabonds into all parts, and hated where-ever they go. An Avenging Hand from above doth ſtill purſue them; and every day the world ſees the Predictions concerning them more and more fulfilled: Which is, as it were, an Ocular Evidence, as well of the Truth of Chriſtianity, as of the Exiſtence of a Juſt God.

I uſe this Argument the rather, becauſe it is a kind of ſenſible proof of a Deity; and not of ſo remote a Nature as the reſt are.

are. Though it be apparent to Reaſon, that there muſt be a Firſt Cauſe of all things; though the common notions and impreſſions we have in our Nature ſhew, who and what that Firſt Cauſe is; though Miracles are undeniably convincing; and Predictions, when accurately fulfilled, demonſtratively infer the Exiſtence of a Being that foreſees all Events, though at the greateſt diſtance; yet becauſe thoſe Obſervations are moſt operative, which moſt nearly affect men, I urge this Obſervation, touching the *Jews* Puniſhment, as being a thing verified by our own Experience. Miracles we have not ſeen; but this Remarkable Judgment againſt the *Jews* we ſee daily; and therein we ſee the plain accompliſhment of ſome Predictions which we know were written ſome conſiderable time before the Events happned; ſo that we may well wonder, how there can be an Atheiſt, as long as there is a *Jew* living in the world. To this purpoſe, a Learned and Judicious Prelate of our Church, who hath ſolidly written upon the great Subject now under my hand, expreſſeth his thoughts in theſe words, with which I ſhall conclude this preſent Point. There is (ſaith he) one particular, which to me ſeemeth very conſiderable for the proof of a Deity,

Biſhop Wilkins's *Nat. Rel. p.* 89.

a Deity, though but little notice of it be taken by others; and that is, The State of the *Jewiſh* Nation, who for theſe 1600 years have been driven out of their own Countrey, having now no particular place of abode belonging to them as a Nation; but are ſcatter'd and diſperſed over all the habitable world, hated and deſpiſed whereever they are permitted to dwell; very frequently perſecuted, impoveriſh'd, baniſh'd, murder'd in vaſt multitudes: And notwithſtanding all this, they are not yet ſo mixt and blended with other Nations, as to be loſt among them; but are ſtill kept up a diſtinct People; there being no Inſtance like this in any Story; as if they were intended for a ſtanding Memorial and Example to the world, of the Divine Power and Vengeance. To me it ſeemeth, among Rational Arguments, one of the plaineſt, not only for the Proof of a Deity, and a Juſt Providence, in purſuing that Nation with ſuch Exemplary Vengeance; but likewiſe for the Authority of Scripture, and the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

HItherto I have ſhewed the Exiſtence of a Supreme Being, that is Eternal, Independent, Self-exiſting, the Author of our common Nature, Omnipotent, Omniſcient; all which Characters are included in the general Notion of a Deity; or a Being that is Eminently and Abſolutely Perfect. I proceed next to ſome other Conſiderations, which argue a Being that is infinite in Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Benignity, as well as Power.

In order thereunto, let us now begin to take a view of that which was propoſed as the Fourth great Head of this Diſcourſe; I mean, the Admirable Frame and State of the Univerſe. For whoever will ſeriouſly reflect upon thoſe various appearances which are in this viſible world, muſt be the moſt ſenſleſs and ſtupid thing in it, if after all the bright manifeſtations of a Deity that are every where diſcoverable, he can at laſt permit himſelf to ſay in his heart, *There is no God. God hath not left himſelf without witneſs*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Acts 14. 17. *No, that which may be known of God is manifeſt to us; for*

for God hath ſhewed it unto us. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. 1. 19. 20.

Here then we meet with Eight Obſervables, which are very fit in their turns to fall under our contemplation.

1. The excellent Order into which the ſeveral parts of the Univerſe are digeſted.

2. The great Beauty that appears throughout the world.

3. The wonderful Uſefulneſs that is in all the branches of the Creation.

4. The curious and exquiſite Structure of them for the Uſes and Ends to which they ſerve.

5. The conſtant Regularity of them in their reſpective Operations.

6. The ample Proviſion that is made for the good of Creatures, eſpecially Mankind.

7. The Reſemblances of Knowledge and Wiſdom in the Operations of things Irrational.

8. The Divine Frame of our own Rational Nature. *O Lord, how glorious are thy works! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all; the earth and heavens are full of thy riches;*

riches; the various teſtimonies of thy greatneſs, and inexhauſtible benignity.

1. *Firſt,* We may obſerve the excellent Order into which the ſeveral parts of the Univerſe are digeſted. This Order is ſeen:

1. In the commodious Situation and Poſition to which they are determined.

2. In the near Relation of them to each other, and Dependance on each other.

3. In the Permanency of them in that State and condition wherein they have been placed.

1. As there are ſeveral Ranks and Claſſes of Creatures, ſo is every Rank determined to its due and proper place. That part of the world we ſtand in immediate need of, is the Earth; and that is placed in the middle of the world, that it may receive influence from all the ambient parts of the Univerſe, to help its Fertility; and the diſtance of it from the Cœleſtial Bodies is ſo commodious, that its Productions are not apt to

be deſtroyed by exceſſes of Heat or Cold, which otherwiſe would unavoidably follow were the diſtance nearer or more remote. It is the proper place for man in this life. For 'tis the Theatre we are to Act on, and the Magazine that yields us the Stores we live by; and therefore 'tis near at hand, hard by all our Neceſſities, and richly furniſh'd with Plants, Fruits, Meats, Entertainments of all ſorts; ſo that 'tis but going out of doors, and induſtrious People may gather their Proviſion, and whatever they can modeſtly deſire, either to ſupply their Wants, or to afford them Pleaſures. And leſt we ſhould drop down ſuddenly, for want of Breath, with our Meats between our Teeth, the Air, which ſerves for Digeſtion and Reſpiration, is, I cannot ſo well ſay in our Neighbourhood, as in our Noſtrils. An Atmoſphere ſo appoſitely plac'd, and ſo adapted to the groſs contexture of our outward Senſes, that it is infinitely more proper for ſenſitive Creatures, than the Fine, Unmixt Æther that is at ſuch a diſtance from us. Thoſe fluid Bodies the Waters, are in their proper place too, treaſured up in concave Receptacles and Chanels, and there ready at hand to quench the Thirſt

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of every Animal; and if Men will be wanton, to ſerve their Senſualities alſo, without endangering their ſafety by inordinate, ſweeping Inundations. The Heavens are to give light and warmth to all Sublunary Creatures, and therefore the provident Hand which formed them, hath ſet them very remote; that thoſe great and glorious Luminaries may caſt their Influences over all the World; and withal ſecure all things living from thoſe Scorchings and Deaths, to which their Vicinity would otherwiſe have unavoidably expoſed them. In ſhort, all things are ſituate where they ſhould be; nor could the wiſeſt Counſel have placed them better, ſuppoſing the wiſeſt Being to have had the diſpoſal and ordering of them.

2. The excellent Order of Creatures is ſeen in the near Relation of them to each other, and Dependance on each other. Where I ſhall ſpeak only of that general and common Reference, which the ſeveral kinds of Creatures, thus ſituated and diſpoſed, do bear to one another. As for the uſefulneſs of particular Branches of the Creation, it will fall under our

eye in its due place. At preſent I am to take notice of that Relation and Connection, that Reſpect and Cognation which is between the Species and Sorts of things which make up this great Frame and Syſtem of Nature. For in the great Volume of the Creation there is a noble Deſign carried on, this Creature having a reſpect to that, and that hanging upon the other, like Premiſes and Conſequents in a well-compos'd Book; ſo that if one part be taken away, not only the Beauty, but the Purpoſe of the whole is loſt. Were all Senſitive Creatures deſtroyed, what would the Light of the *Sun* be to a blind World? Were the Earth annihilated, what would the ſweet Influences of the Pleiades ſignify? Or, were but the Fowls, the Cattel, the Fruits of the Earth removed, what would become of Man, that pretends to be the little Lord of all, and yet is fain to be a Dependant upon theſe poor Creatures, to afford him Proviſion daily, and to furniſh out his Table? Some conceive, that the only great Deſign of Nature is, to ſupport Man; which though I think is too great a Vanity to imagine, yet ſuppoſing it were ſo, how many Creatures are there to be ſerved, before

before it can come to his turn? *I will hear the heavens* (ſaith the Divine Being) *and the heavens ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear Jezreel,* Hoſ. 2. 21, 22. Where we have a Summary Deſcription of the great Order of Nature as things are caſt into a State of Relation and Correſpondence, ſet forth as if they cried to each other, and heard each other, to denote their mutual Subſerviency and Dependance. Thus the Stars by their attractive Beams prepare and enrich the Clouds; the Clouds drop down fatneſs, that fatneſs moiſtens the Surface, and ſupplies the Bowels of the Earth; that Moiſture increaſeth and invigorates thoſe active Particles within, which are the Principles of Vegetation; thoſe Principles carry the ſpiritous, vital Juice to every Tree and Plant; that Juice paſſing through many Nervous Ducts and Conveyances produce Germination; thoſe Germations cover Mountain and Valley with a freſh Verdure; and by theſe various means the Earth receives yearly a kind of new Life; every Species upon it is propagated, every living Individual is fed and cheriſh'd, and Man and Beaſt

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are abundantly provided for a-new, after all the vaſt Conſumptions and Expences of Nature the year before. There is a Series and Connexion of Cauſes, which act upon each other, the ſuperior Cauſe ſtill having a reſpect to the Powers of that which is the next in Subordination; and all ſhew the wonderful Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Supreme Cauſe, in thus ſuiting and adapting the Operations of his Creatures, according to the neceſſities of the ſeveral Branches of his Creation.

And as there is this extrinſecal Reference born by one Creature to another; ſo is there in every one of them an intrinſick Faculty and Diſpoſition, which bears reſpect to the Operations and Productions of thoſe external Cauſes. In all Animals there are eager Appetites, as Hunger and Thirſt, which ſtimulate and excite them every day to Eat and Drink of Natures Bounty. In all Vegetables there are ſpreading Roots, fibrous Receptacles, with open, greedy, capacious Orifices, to entertain, digeſt, and ſend up that animating Sap, which is miniſtred by the reſtleſs Principles of Vegetation. In

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the Bowels of the Earth are hid the multifarious Seeds of Life, prepared for a new aſſiſtance of Salts, Nitre, and the like Supplies, to quicken, actuate, and render them Prolifick. Thoſe quickning Recruits wait for Diſtillations from above, to convey them down into their Apartments; and thoſe Diſtillations are various, according to the Quality and Temper of the Seaſons; and as the Sun and Stars act by their Influences in the Air, where the great Treaſures are annually made ready by various Motions and Secretions, and then ſhed plenteouſly abroad in variety of Forms and Modifications; as, Hail, Snow, Rains, or Dews. Thus each Cauſe bears a Correſpondence and Relation to the Faculties and Diſpoſitions of that which is Subordinate; and thoſe Faculties bear a Reciprocal Correſpondence to the Power and Agency of the next Superior One. There is ſuch an orderly Connection, ſuch a cloſe harmonious Confederacy between the ſeveral Parts of the World, as they are placed and ſituate; that as they all ſeverally depend upon each other for their reſpective Operations, ſo all jointly conſpire to the Preſervation and Maintenance of the whole; which evidently

evidently ſhews, That it could not be blind Fate or Fortune that linked together the Parts of the Univerſe into ſuch an admirable League, ſuch an amicable State of Subſerviency and Aſſiſtance; but a moſt Wiſe and Beneficent Agent, that from the beginning conſulted and provided for the Good of all his Creatures, and accordingly fitted their Powers to that great end. For thoſe Irrational Beings, the glittering Lamps of Heaven, the Air and Earth, Vegetables and Creatures, that are meerly ſenſitive, cannot be ſuppos'd to underſtand the Ends and Scope, the Reaſons and Purpoſes of their Operations. They are not the effects of any Deliberation, or choice of their own, but the conſequents of Neceſſity; and therefore muſt be brought about by the directing Hand and Will of a God of Incomprehenſive Power, of Wiſdom, that they might bear witneſs of his Being and Providence, and excite all Mankind to praiſe and glorify the adorable Perfections of his Nature.

3. The excellent Order of Creatures is ſeen in the Permanency of them in that State and Condition in which they have been

been placed. This Permanency conſiſteth in two things: 1. *Firſt*, In the entire continuance of their Natures. The conſtituent, principal Subſtances of the Univerſe are ſtill the ſame they ever were ſince their firſt Formation, in Number, Meaſure, and Weight. Nothing of their Beauty is faded by Age, nothing of Matter worn away by Motion, no Parts loſt quite by Accident, nor any one Species annihilated by outward Violence, or inward Infirmity and Decay. Though Individuals upon the Terraqueous Globe dye daily, or are cut off, leſt the Earth we inhabit and live upon, and have our Food by, ſhould be over-ſtock'd, yet all ſorts and kinds of Beings remain, from the glorious Furniture of the Firmament, to the meaneſt Species of Flies and Worms. All Vegetables propagate, as in the beginning, the diverſity of Sexes, Male, and Female, in all Animals continues on; Men and Beaſts increaſe and multiply, and perform all their Natural Offices, ever ſince the primordial Benediction. But leſt theſe things ſhould be look'd upon as Productions of Courſe, ſpringing meerly from the Principles and Energy of Plaſtick Nature, what think

we of the Permanent Concinnity and State of the Air, whoſe Salubrious Blaſts, Tranſparency, proper Motions, and all other uſes it was intended for, do ſtill hold on, notwithſtanding all Nuſances and Infections, all Viciſſitudes and Alterations, and all thoſe Diſturbances, Conflicts, and Wars, from contrary jarring Qualities which have been in it, ſince its firſt Expanſion? What can we think of the Cœleſtial Hoſt, that for theſe Six thouſand Years have been every minute caſting and diſperſing their enlivening Beams over the whole World? What can we think of the Sun in particular, that during ſuch a long Tract and Succeſſion of Ages, has been every moment at ſo vaſt an Expence of Light and Heat, its Body ſtill continuing unimpaired, and its Powers neither waſted nor diſabled? How could all this Conſervation be without the help of an Almighty provident Hand, that does by a ſort of new Creation, ſuſtain and ſupply daily the ſeveral Branches of the Univerſe; and did at firſt form them all ſo perfect in their Kinds, and in order to their particular Ends, and for the general Good of the whole; that there

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is no mending the Creation; no altering the Figure, Poſture, Number, or Frame of the Integral Parts of it; no adding any new Species, or deſtroying any old ones, without diſorder and detriment to the great Compages?

Secondly, The permanent ſtate of things is diſcernable, as by the continuance of their Natures, ſo by the conſtant tenor of their Operations and Motions; witneſs (for all) thoſe bright, radiant Bodies over our heads, whoſe circular Travels are ſo exactly periodical, and their Influences ſo conſtant, that they plainly ſhew there is a God above, who hath given them a Law which cannot be broken. By the various Aſpects and Motions of the Moon, the melancholy Solitudes of the Night are abated; the growth of Vegetables is aſſiſted; the increaſe of Animals is promoted; Dews fall to help and cheriſh the ſeminal Powers of the Earth; and (beſides many other advantages) the flowings and ebbings of the Sea are regulated, and thereby the Waters are kept from putrefaction, and the innumerable multitude of Fiſhes are preſerved. And how comes it to paſs, but by the Decree

of a Wiſe and Beneficent Being over all, that theſe Influences are ſo conſtant, and theſe Motions are ſo ſtated and certain, that the Monthly Aſpects, and Annual Revolutions and Courſes of the Moon are ſtill the very ſame; and all this, through a thin fluid Vehicle in which it ſwims? The other Planets, how differently ſoever they move, yet amidſt that Variety, their Rowlings about have all along to this day ſo punctually anſwer'd their determinate Periods, that they carry with them manifeſt Marks of an Unerring Hand that doth direct and govern them; and keeps the parts of them from thoſe Diſſipations, which otherwiſe the Rapidity of their Motion would expoſe them to, in their fine unreſiſting *Æther*. All other Stars (the Sun excepted) are ſaid to be fixt; not that they do not move at all, but becauſe their daily Motion is ſtill directly forward in the ſame Circle, without any particular Retrograde creepings, and without thoſe Aberrations and Deflexions, ſometimes Northward, and ſometimes Southward, which the ſeven wandering Stars obſerve. Now if, according to the old Opinion, theſe great Bodies be ſuppos'd to be faſtned, like ſo many Nails, in

Pellucid,

Pellucid, but Solid Spheres, it is a ſtupendious thing to conſider, how ſuch vaſt, cumberſom Machines ſhould be able to turn about ſo exactly, and in ſuch a conſtant, even courſe, Night and Day, without an Almighty Power that did firſt ſet them on Motion, and doth ſtill ſuperintend and ſteer them. But if they be ſuppos'd to rowl in a free, open *Æther*, it is impoſſible to conceive how ſo many Pendulous Bodies, of ſuch unmeaſurable magnitude, ſo briskly moving in their reſpective Spaces without the leaſt rub to ſtop or hinder them, ſhould not claſh, or croſs, or interfere with one another, but ſtill keep at the ſame diſtances, for ought we know, to an hair's breadth, and perform all their Courſes with equability and conſtancy to an exact point; all this is beyond the reach of Human Reaſon to conceive, unleſs it be granted, that there is a Supreme, Over-ruling Being, who did at firſt ſet them into a determinate order, and hath ever ſince preſerv'd them in that order, maintaining, governing, regulating, and directing their motions by his own Infinite Power, and moſt Watchful Providence.

But

But to ſpeak more particularly of that Glorious Luminary, which every day rejoiceth as a Giant to run its courſe, to viſit the whole world, and to invigorate and cheriſh all things here below with lively Emanations: What can we think of his Diurnal Motion, whereby that Immenſe Creature daily takes his Round, and abſolves his Courſe within the ſpace of 24 hours; and this, not only with far greater celerity, than that of the ſwifteſt Arrow from the ſtrongeſt Bow; and moreover with ſuch exact order, and conſtancy, that for theſe Six thouſand years his daily Revolution has been neither quicker, nor ſlower by one minute; twice only excepted, when at the Special Command of his Maker he was arreſted in his Race, and was made one day to ſtand ſtill, and another day to go backward Ten Degrees? Beſides this Diurnal Race from *Eaſt* to *Weſt*, which cauſes the viciſſitude of Day and Night, what think we of the Sun's Annual Progreſs towards the *Northern*, and then off again towards the *Southern* Tropick, in an Oblique Circle they call the *Zodiack*,

diack, under Twelve Signs, or Conſtellations, each whereof conſiſting of Thirty Degrees, he paſſeth through in Thirty Days, finiſhing his yearly Courſe in 360 Days, or thereabouts; riſing, as he goes, every new day in a new Line parallel to the Equinoxial; and ſo increaſing or leſſening the Hours of the Day, and bringing on the ſeveral Seaſons of the Year, which are ordained for wiſe and good Ends: And hence come the Viciſſitudes of Summer and Winter, of Spring and Fall, of the Laborious Seed-time, and the Joyful Weeks of Harveſt: All which, that great Divider of Days, and Months, and Years, hath all along perform'd, by ſuch an uniform, ſteady, and conſtant tenor in its motions, that this preſent Day, nay this preſent Minute, exactly anſwers to that which was full a Thouſand Years ago, when the Sun moved in the ſame Sign, in the ſame Degree, nay in the ſame Point, wherein it moveth now. All this while I have ſpoken according to Old *Ptolemy*'s Hypotheſis, That the Heavens move; becauſe the Scripture ſpeaks after that manner, as being moſt ſuitable to our ordinary Apprehenſions.

But,

But, whether in fact the ſtars move, or the Earth only, or the Earth and Stars too, is the ſame thing to my preſent purpoſe; and I leave it to our Modern Inquiſitive Philoſophers to diſpute that matter out, and to end it when they can. For, where-ever thoſe Motions be, our Obſervations will return to this point, and muſt reſt here, That theſe Motions are exact, punctual, and preciſe; which yet were impoſſible, without the Decrees and Contrivance of a Supreme, Intelligent Being, or a God, that ſuperintends, orders, and takes care of this great Frame, and Wonderful Machine of the Univerſe.

Now to all this the Scepticks of our Age are ready to tell us from two or three old Blundering Pagan Philoſophers, That this Excellent Order of things came to paſs, not by the Counſel, Skill, and Power of a Deity, but by meer chance. For (that I may in a few words open to you the Myſtery of Infidelity) their grand Creed is this; That from all Eternity there was nothing but Matter and Motion in an Immenſe Space; wherein numberleſs multitudes of ſmall Particles of Matter

Matter, called Atoms, were for a vaſt, long time, dancing and ſporting, playing and toying, juſtling and tumbling, freaking and clathing together; and uſing all endeavours and tricks, how to clutch and combine into Aggregate Bodies, and into different Modifications, Shapes, and Forms: And that after many Rencounters and Trials, though without any Deſign, Forecaſt, or Underſtanding of their own, they hapned to fall into all the things which make up the world: Some fell into a Sun, others made up the Moon, others formed themſelves into great numbers of Twinkling Stars; a frolickſome ſort of Atoms danced together into that which we call the Free, Open Air; the more Dull and Lumpiſh kinds made up an Earth; and thence ſprung up in time many other Contextures which made up Plants and Trees; and abundance ran into Animals, Beaſts and Men; the very Souls of men being (as they ſay) nothing but delicate Modifications of the fineſt, and moſt active Atoms that Matter could afford; where when they are by any untoward Accident or Infirmity, daſht and diſſolved, then they bring Death; which in

their Opinion is only the unclutching of Matter, void of a ſpiritual, intellectual, diſtinct Subſtance, that is ſaid to return to a God to give an Account of its Actions at a Judgment-day; Notions which theſe great Wits of the world (as they take themſelves to be) believe to be nothing but the Inventions of Prieſts and Politicians, to keep Mankind in ſlavery, and to fright people out of their Senſes. Thus inſtead of believing in a God, they believe in Matter and Motion, in Space and Atoms, in Chance and Fortune: For, according to them, as things fall apieces by chance, ſo it was by meer chance that they fell at firſt together; not by the Hand and Directions of a Wiſe, Omnipotent Agent, that gave them their being; by Lucky Hits, by Caſual Concurrences, but by the ſucceſful motions of Blind, Senſeleſs Atoms, accidentally and fortuitouſly jumping together into great variety of Combinations and Figures; and ſo continuing, till Fortune that joined them, makes them fly aſunder again; and till by ſome new Comical Motions they form themſelves into new Shapes.

Now,

Now, though the expoſing of theſe Conceits be Confutation enough, yet I would gravely ask theſe Wiſe Sages, How it can conſiſt with common Reaſon to imagine, that the Fortuitous Motion of Stupid, Unthinking Matter could compoſe all things into ſuch excellent order; as the moſt Intelligent, Prudent Mind could not have made more apt and proper? How could Blind, and conſequently Erroneous Chance, without any deliberation, pitch upon ſuch Places to diſpoſe every thing into, as our common Senſes ſhew to be moſt fit, and commodious? We ſee the Earth is Situate in the Center of the Univerſe, to receive kindly and ſeaſonable Influences, Heat and Cold, Drought and Moiſture, from all the Ambient Parts of this viſible World. The Firmament is expanded at ſuch a convenient diſtance, as that it can communicate its ſweet Influences, without expoſing us, and the things round about us, to thoſe Extremities of Heat, or Cold, whereby a greater Propinquity, or Longinquity would cauſe Living Creatures to

languiſh and dye. Thoſe Lucid Globes which enamel the Firmament, are ſo appoſitely fix'd up and down every-where from Pole to Pole, that the remoteſt Regions participate of their Virtues and Powers. The Sun is determined to ſuch a Fitting Courſe, and to ſuch Convenient Limits, that by its Alternate Acceſſes and Receſſes thoſe Comforting Rays are diſperſed over all the Earth, which at proper Seaſons produce Graſs for the Cattle, Bread to ſtrengthen man's heart, and Oil to make him a chearful Countenance, and generous Wines to refreſh and exhilerate his Spirits. Under the Oppoſite Poles there are the great Treaſures of Snow, which yield to the Hotter Climates plenty of Rain, and Refreſhing Gales of Wind. Not to ſpeak of the Commodious Poſition of the ſeveral Parts in Men, Beaſts, and Plants, which could not be alter'd, I do not ſay, without apparent Deformity, but without inſupportable Inconvenience and Prejudice to the whole Frame. This is enough to ſhew, that the ſeveral Branches of the Univerſe are ſo agreeably diſpos'd and placed, that

that without betraying our Reaſon, and the uſe of our Faculties, we cannot impute thoſe Poſitions to the caſual motion of blind, ſenſeleſs, undeliberating Atoms; but muſt look upon them as the Reſults of Deſign and Choice, and as Arguments of an Intellectual, Provident Being over all, *who worketh all things according to the counſel of his will*; (or, according to the Beſt and Wiſeſt Reaſons) *Epheſ.* 1. 11.

Again, Let me ask our pretending Philoſophers, How can it conſiſt with common Reaſon to conceive, That thoſe Congruities and Relations which theſe ſeveral parts of the world bare to each other; thoſe Aptitudes and Concinnities which are between the Diſpoſition of ſome things, and the Faculties of others; ſo that this thing is for the uſe of that, and that thing reciprocally fitted for this; how, I ſay, can theſe mutual Correſpondences be rationally aſcribed to nothing but mere Fortune and Chance? Is not the Eye fitted for the ſeeing of Light, and Light fitted for the uſe of the Eye? Are not all the Senſes adapted to their proper Objects, and thoſe Objects adapted to gratify

gratify the Senſes? Is not the Air a proper vehicle for Volatile Creatures, and the Frame of thoſe Creatures ſuited to the Contexture of the Air? Are not the Waters agreeable to Fiſh, and the Nature of Fiſh ſo adapted to the Waters, that they cannot ſubſiſt in a thinner Element? In ſhort, Are not the parts of Nature's great Fabrick ſo congruouſly fitted to each other, like ſo many Springs and Wheels in the moſt curious piece of Art, that there is no taking away a part, without diſordering and disjoynting the whole? And how can all this be thought to proceed from Chance, any more than the Frame of a Watch or a Clock? Theſe things ſhew, that they were intended for Ends, and where Ends are to be ſerved, there muſt be Knowledge, Counſel, and Forecaſt, how to make choice of proper Means, and how to fit thoſe Means together for due application: And when we ſee the Parts of the whole World ſo admirably fitted, ſuited, and adapted to each other in ſuch exquiſite Order, What extreme ſottiſhneſs is it not, to attribute thoſe Congruities to ſtupid, blundering Fortune, which are ſo many Sculptures of a Di-

a Divine Hand, ſo many plain Evidences of the Wiſeſt Mind, and the Higheſt Reaſon? Once more let me ask, How it can conſiſt with Reaſon to believe, that this vaſt Compages could hold and continue in the ſame excellent Order for ſo many Thouſand years together, if it fell into it at the firſt by mere Accident? Or how it could come to paſs, that the Parts of it have not been as yet Diſunited and Scatter'd by Motion, if nothing but Fortuitous Motion joined them? All Motion ſerveth, eſpecially if it be violent and ſwift, either to Wear away Matter by degrees, or to Diſſolve and Diſſipate the Particles on a ſudden, and to make all about it fly; as we ſee clearly by the rapid Revolutions of every Wheel about its Axis. Suppoſing then one or other of theſe Three things, which are the principal accounts; either that the Earth alone whirls about upon an Axis of its own; or, that the Heavens turn round upon the great Axis of the Univerſe, the Earth lying quiet, and the Sun moving both forward and retrograde perpetually; or, thirdly, That the motion is divided, the Earth doing the Diurnal part,

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and the Sun abſolving that part which is Annual; which of theſe Opinions ſoever men are pleaſed to follow, they muſt grant on all hands, that the motions are performed with the greateſt velocity and quickneſs. And how then can ſo many Combinations of Atoms be rationally ſuppoſed able to have ſtill held it out againſt the utmoſt Rapidity; and that all along, during the Succeſſion of ſo many Years and Ages; ſo that in all this time, neither the Parts of any one moving Body have been impaired, nor the motion of any one hath been diſturbed out of its orderly Tenor? eſpecially, ſince all is ſuppoſed by our Refined Wits to depend upon Chance; which is far more likely to diſſolve, or diſorder a Rapid Body, than ever it was to form it; for they themſelves cannot tell the manner how this was done; but 'tis very eaſie for any man to conceive how that may be; and if there be nothing but Luck in the caſe, it muſt be a great wonder to any conſidering man, that by ſome odd Luck or other the whole World hath not been diſſolved long ago.

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To draw this Conſideration to a period. Suppoſe theſe Scepticks ſhould ſee (what I have ſomewhere read of) a Great Machine of Braſs, like that Sphere, which *Tully* ſaith his Friend *Poſidonius* made, contriv'd according to *Ptolemy*'s Hypotheſis, wherein there is a viſible Deſcription of the Heavens and Earth; of the ſuppoſed Orbs and Spheres above; of the Cycles and Epicycles; with an ingenious, but imperfect Repreſentation of the Centrical and Eccentrical Motions of the Heavenly Bodies; and all this in a round Scheme of Materials, orderly diſpos'd in their proper places; fitted together in apt Connexions; and holding all together in a firm, laſting, and permanent Frame: Would they themſelves fancy this Machine to have been formed, not by the Deſign, Art, or Hand of any Skilful Workman; but only by Chance, and by the Fortuitous Motion of Atoms? But becauſe ſuch a Machine I ſpeak of, is not every where to be ſeen, let them with an accurate Eye obſerve ſome Pieces of Art, which have been the Curious

(though now Ordinary) Improvement of this Age; I mean, the Pendulum Clocks; wherein the Movements are ſo fine, ſo adapted to each other, ſo regular, nay ſo ſteady and conſtant in their courſe, that ſome (without any help) will go, and keep their Order a full Month; ſome a Year, and ſome more; and can it be rational to impute all this to Luck, and Fortune; and to the caſual falling together of unguided Particles of Matter; when Chance never produceth any thing that is orderly and uniform, exact and ſteady, ſtable, fixt, and conſtant? Or, thirdly, Let them view a Common Globe, and diſtinctly obſerve the Poles, the Axis, the Horizon, the Meridian, the Æquator, the Ecliptick, the Zodiack, the Tropicks, and all the Degrees whereby they may follow, and trace with their Finger the determinate courſe of the Sun, and then let them ſay, whether that poor, ordinary Frame can be thought the effect of Blind Fortune too. Nay, Laſtly, Let them ſurvey their own Houſes, and examine the Solidity of the Foundations, the Cementing of the Walls, the Contigna-

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tion of the Beams and Rafters, and all the parts of the Buildings, ſo duly and properly laid, ſo regularly erected, ſo ſtrongly faſtned, ſo depending upon each other for ſupport, ſo fitted and compacted for uſe; and all making up ſuch Firm, Durable, and Permanent Structures, as can bid defiance to Winds and Tempeſts; and after all, would it not be ridiculous Folly to conceive, that thoſe Edifices were not intended for uſe by any Architect's Forecaſt, nor raiſed by any Architect's Contrivance, nor finiſh'd by any Architect's Skill and Workmanſhip, but that all hapned to be erected by the Fortuitous Concurrence of Unguided Inſtruments, and by the accidental motion of Irrational Materials; the Stones leaping by chance out of the Qarries, the Timbers dancing away from their Roots, the Mortar taking a frolick to be in too; and Saws, and Axes, and Trowels, and Hammers, and Nails, and Pins, helping and moving too by Chance, they know not how, nor when? Now if theſe be ſuch Senſeleſs Imaginations, what groſs Stupidity is it to think,

that this Goodly, Magnificent Fabrick the Univerſe, was made without the Counſel and Wiſdom of a Divine Architect, and merely by the chance-motions and friskings of ſmall Particles of Matter, that without the Power and Directions of an Infinite Mind, were no more able to make a Star, or a Man, than the Motes of the Sun were to Re-build the Great City of *London*, when it lay in Aſhes?

I have inſtanced in theſe things of Art, to ſhew the monſtrous unreaſonableneſs of thoſe, who will not allow ſo much of Skill and Contrivance to have been uſed in ſetting the World into this Commodious, Apt, and Permanent Order, as is neceſſary for the perfecting of Humane Inventions: tho indeed there was infinitely more of Wiſdom neceſſary, beſides the Power requiſite to raiſe the Materials of the World out of nothing. For, as a Learned Writer ſpeaks, may not the moſt Excellent Pieces of Humane Artifice, the Faireſt Structures, the Fineſt Portraictures, the moſt Ingenious and Uſeful Enquiries, ſuch as we are wont moſt

moſt to admire and commend, with infinitely more eaſe happen to exiſt, without any Induſtry or Contrivance ſpent upon them? If we cannot allow thoſe rude Imitations of Nature to ſpring up of themſelves, but as ſoon as we eſpy them, are ready to acknowledge them Products of Excellent Art, though we know not the Artiſt, nor ſaw him work; how much more reaſon is there that we ſhould believe thoſe Works of Nature, ſo incomparably more Accurate, to proceed alſo from Art, although inviſible to us (that is, Divine) and performing its Workmanſhip by a Secret Hand?

This Argument for the Exiſtence of a Deity, was urged by that Wiſe Philoſopher, *Cicero*; who obſerv'd, That in the Heavens there is nothing of Fortune, Temerity, or Error, nothing which is vain, or uſeleſs; but that on the contrary, there is all Order, Truth, Reaſon, and Conſtancy. And hence he ſhews, That ſince things perfected by Nature

Nulla in Cœlo nec fortuna, nec temeritas, nec erratio, nec vanitas ineſt; contraque omnis ordo, veritas, ratio, conſtantia. *Cic.* de Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

ture are much better than Works performed by Art, and yet Art it ſelf doth nothing without Reaſon; therefore we muſt believe, that Nature is not void of Reaſon and Wiſdom. If then (ſays he) when you ſee a Sign, or a Picture drawn, you know that there Art was uſed; or, when at a diſtance you ſee a Ship taking its courſe, you doubt not but it is ſteered by Reaſon and Art: Or, when you look upon a Sun-Dial, you conclude, that the Hours of the Day are ſhew'd by Art, and not by Chance; how can it conſiſt with Reaſon to think, that the World which contains all thoſe Arts, and all Artificers, and indeed all manner of things, can be without Counſel and Wiſdom to order it? If (ſays he again) a Man ſhould carry

Si ergo meliora ſunt ea, quæ naturâ, quàm illa quæ arte perfecta ſunt, nec ars efficit quidquam ſine ratione; ne natura quidem rationis expers eſt habenda. Quî igitur convenit, Signum aut tabulam pictam cùm aſpexeris, ſcire adhibitam eſſe artem; cumque procul curſum navigii videris, non dubitare quin id ratione, atque arte moveatur; aut cùm Solarium vel deſcriptum, aut ex aquâ contemplere, intelligere declarari horas arte, non caſu; mundum autem qui & has ipſas artes, & earum artifices, & cuncta complectatur, conſilii & rationis expertem putare? Quòd ſi in Scythiam, aut in Britanniam Shpæram aliquis tulerit, hanc, quam nuper familiaris noſter effecit, Poſidonius, cujus ſingulæ converſiones idem efficiunt in Sole, & in Lunâ; & in quinque ſtellis

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ry into *Scythia*, or *Britain*, that Sphere which our Friend *Poſidonius* lately made, wherein are repreſented the Motions of the Sun, and Moon, and the five other wandring Stars, juſt as they move every Day and Night in the Heavens, Who of thoſe Barbarous People would doubt whether that Sphere were made by perfect Art? And then how can it ſtand with Reaſon to doubt concerning the World, out of which all things do ſpring, and are made; whether That was formed by Chance, or Nature, or by a Wiſe and Divine Mind? And hence, a little after, that Excellent Author queſtions, Whether he ought to have the name of a Man given him, who when he ſees the motions of the Heavens to be ſo certain, the ranks of the Stars to be ſetled, and all things to be ſo connected and

errantibus, quod efficitur in Cœlo ſingulis diebus & noctibus, quis in illâ Barbarie dubitet, quin ea Sphæra ſit perfecta ratione? Hî autem dubitant de mundo, ex quo oriuntur & fiunt omnia, caſune ipſe ſit effectus, aut neceſſitate aliquâ, an ratione, ac mente Divinâ? Ibid.

Quis enim hunc hominem dixerit, qui cùm tam certos Cœli motus, tam ratos aſtrorum ordines, tamque omnia inter ſe connexa & apta viderit, neget in his ullam ineſſe rationem, eaque caſu fieri dicat, quæ quanto conſilio gerantur, nullo conſilio aſſequi poſſumus? Ibid.

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fitted together, ſhall after all, deny that there is Reaſon for all theſe things; and ſay, that they were done by Chance, when our Underſtanding cannot reach, or comprehend the Great Counſel and Wiſdom, whereby they are done or performed.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THE next thing that ſhews the Exiſtence of a God, is the great Beauty which appears in the Univerſe; whereby I mean, that entertaining and delightful View, which the admirable Frame of the World doth afford us. For which way ſoever we caſt our Eyes, whether upward or downward, whether on this ſide or on that, What charming Objects are there every where for us to contemplate, with unſpeakable Pleaſure and Satisfaction? 1. For their Multitudes. 2. For their Splendor. 3. For their Variety. 4. For the Comelineſs and Delicacy of their Frame; which Four things make up the Beauty of the Creation.

1. And, Firſt, If we look upward, What a Magnificent and Auguſt Expanſion is there above to entertain our Eyes? A fit Curtain to be ſtretched out before the glorious Habitation of the Divine Majeſty, and to be a Partition-Veil between that moſt Holy One, the Glorious God, and his poor Creatures.

And who can tell the Number of the Stars, or call them by their Names? What Eſſays ſoever obſerving Aſtronomers have made, it is no more in the Power of Man, than it is to bind the ſweet Influences of the *Pleiades*, or to looſe the Bands of *Orion*, or to bring forth *Mazzaroth* in his Seaſon, or to guide *Arcturus* with his Sons; as the Expreſſions are, *Job* 38. For which way ſoever we move, we ſtill make new Diſcoveries; ſtill we find a new entertaining Proſpect of Lights without Number. That Multitude which is obvious to every Man's Eye, is uninveſtigable by us; beſides that immenſe Tract, uſually called the Milky-way, which is made up of a Congeries of innumerable leſſer Stars, that by reaſon of their vaſt diſtance from us are not ſingly diſcernable, but altogether do caſt the appearance of a White ſpacious Cloud, or Zone, by the mixture and union of their langnid Beams. But by the uſe of that artificial Inſtrument, the Teleſcope, great numbers of Stars have been lately diſcovered, which, probably, were never obſerved by Man before: And (as a learned Author tells us) its likely, that had we more perfect Teleſcopes, many

Mr. Ray, of the Wiſd. of God in the Creat.

many Thouſands more might be diſcovered; and yet, after all, an incredible Multitude remain, by reaſon of their immenſe diſtance beyond all ken by the beſt Teleſcopes that could poſſibly be invented, or poliſhed by the Wit and Hand of an Angel. For if the World be as *Des Cartes* would have it, indefintely extended; that is, ſo far as no humane Intellect can fancy any Bounds of it; then what we ſee, or can come to ſee, muſt be the leaſt part of what is undiſcoverable by us; the whole Univerſe extending a Thouſand times farther beyond the utmoſt Stars we can poſſibly deſcry, than thoſe be diſtant from the Earth we live upon. But we need not go ſo far in our Conjectures; for if that new Hypotheſis, which ſeemeth moſt Rational, be granted, That the fixed Stars are not all placed in one and the ſame concave Spherical Superficies, equidiſtant from us as they ſeem to be; but that they are variouſly and diſperſedly ſituate, ſome nearer, ſome further off, juſt like Trees in a great Wood or Foreſt; this alone, were there nothing elſe to be conſidered, is enough to ſhew the exceeding Greatneſs and Fecundity of that Divine Pow-

er, which Adorned and Beautified thoſe Regions above with ſuch Multitudes of glorious Luminaries, as by the Scripture Compariſon, *Gen.* 22. 17. ſeem equally as impoſſible to be counted up, as the Sands that are upon the Sea-ſhore.

But beſides the Numbers, we muſt reflect upon the Magnitude of thoſe glorious Bodies, which plain Reaſon will force us to conclude in general to be very great and immenſe. For though they appear to us to be ſmall in their proportions, the Sun and Moon excepted, yet that is becauſe of their vaſt diſtance from the Eye. There are certain Rules in Mathematicks, and thoſe grounded upon very probable Obſervations, whereby the moſt learned and modeſt Aſtronomers, comparing the Diameters of ſome Stars with the Diameter of the Earth, have given us ſuch accounts as to ordinary Capacities ſound at the firſt hearing, not only amazing but utterly incredible. And though I cannot undertake to vouch for the exactneſs of the computations; yet on the other hand, I muſt confeſs my inabilities to ſhew why they may not be thought right and true in a great meaſure.

ſure. Who would think that the Sun is 139 times bigger than the Earth? And yet this, I think, is the very leaſt account; for ſome skilful Aſtronomers reckon above 160. Who that takes meaſures by his Eye-ſight would imagine, that the Three Planets above the Sun do bear ſuch diſproportions to the Terreſtrial Globe, as to be the lowermoſt above once, the next Two above Eighty times bigger? And yet there are curious and inquiſitive Philoſophers that pretend to make theſe Calculations good by Mathematical Demonſtration. As to the fixt Stars, their Dimenſions are ſaid to be proportionable, and the now received Opinion is, that how numberleſs ſoever they be, they are (the principal ones eſpecially) ſo many leſſer Suns, or Sun-like Bodies. But waving all pretences to exactneſs, it muſt be granted on all hands, that they are of vaſt Magnitudes, how ſmall ſoever they ſeem to us, by reaſon of their great height and diſtance from us: Which thing being duly conſidered, What but an Omnipotent, and moſt Intelligent Being can be thought to have formed ſuch Worlds (as it were) of immenſe, glorious Creatures, wherewith the Firma-

ment is adorned? Can it be reaſonble to conceive, that ſuch a vaſt orderly Hoſt was raiſed by the Chance-Motion of ſenſeleſs Atoms? Or, that Chance, which never yet built a Cottage, or drew a Picture, or paved an Houſe, could firſt make, and then furniſh the Heavens after that magnificent and wonderful Manner? *Cicero* conſidering thoſe glittering Bodies in the Sky, their Multitudes, Greatneſs, Motion, Order and Commodious Situations, ſo that inſtead of annoying the Earth, they are ſerviceable and beneficial to all things in it, could not but admire how it ſhould enter into any Man's Heart to think, that ſuch a goodly, beautiful Structure was framed by the fortuitous Concourſe of blind and undeſigning Particles of Matter, that could never build a City, or a Temple, or a Portico. After that rate (ſays he) they may as well believe, that by throwing multitudes of Letters upon the ground, *Ennius* his *Annals* may be made by chance, ſo as to become a fair, legible and intelligible Book; whereas no one Verſe was ever ſo compoſed. (And is not ſuch a little thing more eaſy to be formed by chance, than the large Volume of the World?) And hence that excellent

Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

excellent Author proceeds to a Diſcourſe of *Ariſtotle*'s to this purpoſe: Suppoſe ſome perſons ſhould have dwelt all their days under ground, in ſtately Domicils, adorned with Imagery and Pictures, and furniſh'd with all neceſſaries to make their lives happy, and there ſhould have heard ſome rumour of a Numen, and Power Divine: And ſuppoſe that after a while, by the ſudden opening of ſome Caverns of the Earth, thoſe Perſons ſhould ſtep out into theſe Parts of the World, and behold the Earth, Sun, and Heavens, and obſerve the greatneſs of the Clouds, the violence of the Winds, the bigneſs, beauty, and influence of the Sun; and that the Day dependeth upon his Preſence: And ſuppoſe when Night comes they ſhould behold the Face of the Heavens ſo adorned, the various aſpects of the Moon, the order and motion of the Stars, their riſing and ſetting, and their ſtated and perpetual Courſes; when they ſaw all theſe things, they could not but believe that there is a God, and that theſe are the Works of God. By theſe wiſe Meditations of intelligent Pagans we ſee, that there are in the World, and eſpecially in the Heavens, ſuch Evidences of

a Deity as ſhine bright upon the Mind; ſo that plain honeſt Nature bears Witneſs to the Truth of that, *Pſal.* 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament ſheweth his handy work.*

2. If now, in the next place, we lower our Contemplations, by taking our Eyes off from the Magnificence by God's Throne, to behold a little what may be ſeen about his Footſtool; with what Pleaſure and Raviſhings may we find aſtoniſhing Objects for Number and Varieties? In both reſpects they are next to Infinite: Which ſhews that nothing but an Underſtanding infinitely perfect, a Will infinitely efficacious, and a Power infinitely extenſive, could give them a Being, or preſerve them in it; becauſe more muſt be ſuppos'd to be in the Agent, eſpecially in a voluntary and Divine Agent, than is in its Effects. Firſt then, as to the Number of them. The moſt aſſuming Scepticks will not have the Confidence to deny, but that it is impoſſible for all Mankind to give a diſtinct Account of Individuals; for who can be anſwerable for the Catalogue of Men only? Indeed great pains

pains have been taken by ſome critical Naturaliſts, and particularly by that learned Author of our own before-mention'd, to diſcover the Tale of Species, or the ſeveral ſorts and kinds of things with Life. And becauſe Books are not ready at every one's Hand, let me give you the Summ in ſhort, which ſeemeth to be this; The Species of Beaſts, certainly known and diſcover'd, about 150. The Species of Birds, about 500. The Species of Fiſhes above 3000. The Species of Inſects, 20000. And the Species of Plants above that Number. But how well ſoever theſe worthy Obſervers and Secretaries of Nature have deſerv'd of the World for their Curious and elaborate Enquiries, ſtill they ſpeak but like Men, whoſe Knowledge is, and unavoidably muſt be of a ſhort reach in comparison; for what Men can be accountable for all the known Parts of the World? and eſpecially for thoſe Parts which are as yet undiſcover'd? However, the Eſtimate is the more laudable, becauſe it is modeſt; there being, Secondly, great Variety, as well as Numbers, of things on Earth, that are included and comprehended under one and the ſame Species;

Species; which ſtill ſhews the Beauty of the Creation the more: As, the Lilies (for Example) which though they are not allow'd a Specifick difference, to make them every one a diſtinct ſort or kind of Flower; yet a Numerical difference muſt be allow'd them, by reaſon of their plain difference as to Growth, Colour, Shape, and Smell. I uſe this Inſtance the rather, becauſe the Lord Jeſus himſelf was pleas'd to ſend us to the *Lilies of the field* for our Inſtruction, *Math.* 6. But the Obſervation extends to many other Productions, wherein we find great diverſity in one reſpect or other, though they be of the ſame Kind. And this variety of things, which ſtill operates conformably to their own Powers and Faculties, carries with it a plain Stamp of an Hand acting with fecundity of Power, directed and govern'd by abundant Wiſdom. For though an Infinite Power may form things without Number or End, yet the Beauty of that Power is beſt ſeen by the diverſity of its Strokes, which make up one comely and fair Compoſure, as variety of agreeable Features and Lineaments make up a beautiful Face. Such is the admira-

mirable *Decorum* that is in this ſpacious Univerſe, in that it is not ſtock'd with numerous Generations of one Kind only (which yet a boundleſs and uncontroulable Power cou'd have made) but is checquer'd (as was more agreeable to Wiſdom) with a Multiplicity of Species, that the fecundity of the Power might be more wonderfully diſplay'd, the Glory of the Divine Goodneſs might be more viſibly extended round about the World, and that all Rational Creatures might be more eaſily and throughly taught to admire and adore that Munificent Being, which from time to time maintaineth ſo many abundant ſorts of Creatures at the conſtant charge of his Providence. We ſee how one Creature is miniſterial and ſerviceable to another; as Graſs is for the Cattel; Fruits for Beaſts, Fowls, and Inſects; and Animals themſelves for the uſe of Men, (and every Man ſhou'd be for the ſervice of God.) Now by this admirable State of things, that provident care ſeems to have been taken from the beginning, which the Son of God took at the Miracle of the Loaves and Fiſhes, that nothing ſhou'd be loſt, *John* 6. 17.

17. Nothing is quite loſt upon the Earth; but what one Creature leaves, another takes; what this kind refuſeth, another ſort gathers; ſo that at the end of the Year, Men and Animals conſtantly make even with the World, and ſpend the Liberality of Nature; all waiting on the Providence of a Superiour Being, to give them their Meat again in due Seaſon. Things indued with Life being thus various, and that variety being thus uſeful as well as entertaining, what can a Man's next Thought be, but that there is a Glorious God, who made his Creatures in Number, Meaſure, and Weight; not only to diſplay the Exuberance and Tranſcendency of his Power, but alſo to exemplifie the infinity of his Skill, Wiſdom, and Munificence? And yet I have taken no notice of the variety of things inanimate here below, or of their various Diſpoſitions, Qualities, and Modifications, which yet are aſtoniſhing Arguments of a Divine Mind, that ſo appoſitely form'd ſuch a vaſt multiplicity of Beings, according to ſuch innumerable and ſuch beauteous *Idea's*. The diverſity of Elements, with their various Mixtures and Tempera-

peraments in this lower World: The attracting, penetrating, refrigerating Motions of the Air, and the various Appearances in it of Rain, Hail, Snow, Thunder, Lightnings, Clouds, Winds, Rainbows, Comets, and other liquid Meteors; the variety of Waters, as Springs, Rivers, Lakes, Seas, Baths; their various Colours, Smells, and Taſtes, together with their various Courſes and Reciprocations; the uninveſtigable variety within the Earth, Quarries, Minerals, Metals, Loadſtones, Subterraneous Fire, Caverns, Treaſures of Salts, Nitres, Bitumens, Sulphurs, precious Stones and Gemms of great variety. In ſhort, whatever is for the Advantage, or Comfort, or Pleaſure, or Ornament of our Lives, we fetch out of the Earth in great abundance: All theſe multifarious Creatures ſpeak the Forecaſt and Providence of a moſt wiſe and liberal Being, that of his Goodneſs, was pleas'd thus to fill the whole Univerſe with his Riches. This Pulchritude of the World ariſing from the variety of its Furniture, was to *Cicero* a convincing Argument of the Exiſtence of a God; the Perennity of ſo many Fountains, the Delicacy of Streams,

Streams, the Garniture of Banks by the ſides of Rivers, the vaſtneſs of Caves, the aſperity of Rocks, the height of many hanging Mountains, the immenſity of Champion Countries, the hidden Veins of Silver and Gold, the infinite ſtore of Marbles, the goodlineſs of Seas, the multitude and varieties of Iſlands, the Amenity of Shores, and the innumerable diverſity of Things by, and on the Sea-ſhores: And to ſay after all, that this admirable and delightful Variety happen'd by the caſual Motion of blind, irrational, and unguided Atoms, is far more abſurd than to ſay, that *Cicero*'s Orations were compos'd by the caſual droppings of Ink, without the help of any Hands or Brains, though they contain ſuch variety of Matter, ſuch copiouſneſs of Style, ſuch elegancy of Phraſe, ſuch abundance of Senſe, Argument, and Wit, that the whole Air of them ſhews them to have been contrived and penned by a Man of excellent Art, and the acuteſt Underſtanding.

3. If we caſt our Eyes on further yet, we may ſee the beauty of the Creation, as by the variety, ſo by the Symmetry

Symmetry and comlineſs of thoſe things which every where fall under our Contemplation. With what admirable Contrivance are the innumerable Tribes of Fiſhes made, to live in a little World by themſelves? to feed and propagate, to ſwim and play, to poize and ſteer their Bodies in their fluid Element? How exquiſite is the formation of all the Senſitive Creatures upon the Earth, from the Lion and Leopard, from the Elephant and Camel, to the Ox and Aſs? What affecting variety of Art is there in the formation of Man? *O Lord* (ſaith David) *I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works in me, and that my ſoul knoweth right well. My ſubſtance was not hid from thee when I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth. Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance being yet unperfect, and in thy Book were all my members written, which day by day were faſhioned, when as yet there were none of them. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it,* Pſalm 139. But though the Myſtery of God's Workmanſhip within us be not diſcoverable by eve-

ry

ry Eye, yet the external Beauty of this Houſe of Clay affecteth all Men, eſpecially when Innocence and Goodneſs are the Inhabitants; a goodly Structure of Nerves, Veins, Arteries, Tendons, Muſcles, Vitals, Bones, Ligaments, all cover'd over with a beauteous Skin, adorn'd with Features and Lineaments, with Shapes and Colours, to which the moſt ſullen Stoicks, nay the greateſt and proudeſt Heroes, have humbly offer'd up themſelves, not Votaries only, but ſometimes Sacrifices alſo. What do I ſpeak of the graceful Form of Humane Bodies? View the moſt contemptible Creatures upon Earth, and you will find the excellent Curioſity of their Contrivance for the Ends and uſes they are deſign'd unto, from the Velvet Mole even to thoſe creeping Animals which ſtrike us with Horrour at the ſight of them; the Snake, the Adder, the Evet, the Lizzard, and the very Toad, who have ſuch a Symmetry of Parts, ſuch ſpeckled Contextures, ſuch beauteous Colours, as ſhew that they ſtole not into the World without the Will of that provident Being, who thought fit to adorn the Univerſe with great variety.

But

But of thoſe ordinary Creatures we familiarly behold, there are eſpecially three ſorts, which for the exquiſiteneſs of their Frame, or for the delicacy of their Complexion, or for both, are no little Ornament to the Creation. Firſt Inſects, which though they are lookt upon as the Refuſe parts of the World, yet do bear the Signatures of a moſt accurate Hand, and bring to my Mind St. *Paul*'s Obſervation of the Fabrick and Garniture of our Bodies, 1 *Cor.* 12. *The eye cannot ſay to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the foot, I have no need of you. Nay much more thoſe members of the body which ſeem to be more feeble, are neceſſary. And thoſe members of the body which we think to be leſs honourable, upon theſe we beſtow the more abundant honour; and our uncomly parts have more abundant comlineſs.* The meaning is, that where Natural Beauty is wanting, Artificial Beauty by handſome Clothes doth make amends. In like manner thoſe ignoble Creatures I now ſpeak of, how low ſoever the Divine Hand hath placed them in Rank and Order, their want of Honour in reſpect of their Station, is ſupply'd and

made up by the Beauties beſtow'd upon them in reſpect of their Contexture: Witneſs the Gildings of the Waſp, the Hornet, the Bee, and many ſuch-like Inſects; the Gayeties of the Butterfly; the Garniture of the Caterpillar; the Luſtre of the Glow-Worm; the Gloſſes of the Beetle; the Elegancies of the Graſhopper; the fine Embelliſhments of many Garden and Meadow-Inſects, which I cannot name; the delicate forms of Flies of all ſorts, eſpecially the various Beauties of thoſe which in Summer you may with great Admiration behold about Ponds and Rivers; their incomparable Shapes; their gaudy Trains; their Or's and Azures; their curious Lineaments and rich Embroideries; all theſe are ſo many legible Characters in the Volume of the Creation, to inſtruct us, that the Maker of the Univerſe is a Divine Being, infinite in Knowledge, Wiſdom, and Fecundity. I ſhall cloſe this with the Obſervation of a learned Writer, concerning the difference between Natural and Artificial things, which appears by the help of the Microſcope, ſince we have had the uſe and improvement of it. Whatever

Bp. *Wilkins* Nat. Rel. *p.* 80.

ever is Natural, doth by the Microſcope appear adorn'd with all imaginable Elegance and Beauty. There are ſuch inimitable Gildings and Embroideries in the ſmalleſt Seeds of Plants, but eſpecially in the Parts of Animals, in the Head or Eye of a ſmall Fly; ſuch accurate Order and Symmetry in the frame of the moſt minute Creatures, as no Man will be able to conceive without ſeeing of them.

4. Another ſort of Creatures which ſerve as well for the Ornament of the Creation, as for the Service and Delight of Men, is that winged Quire of Birds which entertain us with melodious Conſorts, and ſhou'd teach us to offer up daily Hymns of Praiſe to the Honour of that God, who feedeth Man and Beaſt, even to *the young ravens which call upon him*, Pſalm 147. and begrudgeth not his Altars to be an *houſe for the ſparrow, and a neſt for the ſwallow to lay her young*, Pſalm 84. And how artfully are thoſe Creatures form'd for their reſpective ends? How appoſitely are all their Organs fitted, that they may be able to diſcover all Meats that are proper for them; to gather their various ſorts of Food,

from the Worms in the Earth to the Flies and Inſects in the Air; to flee and ſhelter themſelves from Deaths and Dangers; to ſail about in their thin Element; and to fill Mountains and Valleys, Woods and Fields, with their ſweet Harmonies? Of all Animals the Fowls of the Air (if you take the whole Set of them) appear to the open Eye the moſt beautiful; excepting ſome Birds of prey, ſuch as the Raven, the Daw, which want that Splendor which others have; as if the tender Being, whoſe Mercies are over all his Works, deſign'd to diſgrace, even in irrational Creatures, all bloodineſs and cruelty of Temper. With what delicate variety are the more innocent ſorts adorn'd, eſpecially ſuch as live upon Seeds and Worms? Their party-colour'd Cloathing, their beauteous Heads and Breaſts, their Plumes of Silver and Gold; all ſocketted within ſuch Nerves and Ligaments, and ſized in ſuch due Proportions for flight, and deckt with ſuch ſplendid Curioſity, that a Man can hardly ſee a Feather which ſhews not the Art of a Divine Hand.

But,

But, as our Saviour himſelf ſaid, *Conſider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they ſpin, and yet your heavenly Father clothes them.* And how various and beautiful is that Rayment? I muſt not pretend to deſcribe it, ſince no Art can reach the wonderful fineries of Nature. And what we call Nature is nothing but yet the forming Power or Faculty of ſeminal Principles, directed by the Will of a wiſe ſupreme Being, in order to the reſpective Ends and Uſes of the things which are to be formed. Now, to inſtance in our common Lily; do but obſerve the congruous Complication of its fibrous Roots, the procerity and decence of the Stalk, the Ornaments upon its Head, the conformity of the Flower to all others of the ſame kind, the Odour it yields, its tender Seeds provided againſt the next Year; and thoſe ſurrounded with a graceful Defence, conſiſting of ſuch curious Diviſions, tinctur'd with ſuch Bluſhings, criticiz'd with ſuch Edgings; and all theſe ſupported and maintain'd by a curious Contexture of Filaments, conveying the Powers of Life all over through a Net-work of the moſt ex-

quiſite Fibres, all wrapt up in a lovely Skin, and thereby defended from the annoyances and rudeneſſes of Weather. And what I have ſaid of the Lily, is obſervable in every other Flower wherewith the Surface of the Earth is beautified; nay in every Bloſſom wherewith the Heads of Trees are adorned; the meaneſt whereof conſiſteth of ſuch a delicate Shape, Form, and Structure, as plainly ſhews that they are not the caſual Works of ſtupid bungling Atoms, but the fair Productions of an orderly Power, ſuperintended and guided by an intelligent Being, that at firſt made all things by the fertil energy of his Will. Can any Man of ſound Reaſon believe that all theſe Elegances did ever jump together by chance? Was an Houſe, or a Room, ever beautify'd with Carvings, Paintings, and Tapeſtry, by meer Chance; that is, without Hand, or Inſtrument, or Deſign? Did blind Chance ever draw one Landskip, with Trees, Flowers, Birds and Cattel repreſented in it? Did it ever draw the Picture of an Aſs? a thing ſo dull and ſtupid, that one would think it moſt eaſily done by the caſual aggregation of

of ſenſeleſs Atoms, if Chance ever did any thing of that kind at all. And is it rational to believe, that Chance made a whole beautiful World of Originals, when it could never yet give us one Copy? No; theſe beauteous Productions ſhew the print of an Hand that formed all things according to the higheſt Reaſon, and with the moſt ſtupendious Skill and Art; otherwiſe it were impoſſible to conceive how there could be ſuch great diverſity of comely Species; ſuch Concinnities and Symmetries in them; ſuch regularity of handſom Strokes; ſuch congruous Features and Lineaments; ſuch curioſity of various Forms, as we ſee adorn the Creation, and entertain our Eyes with Delight and Aſtoniſhment.

If it be ſaid, that all this proceeds from Seminal Principles, acting in every thing by the Virtue and Faculty of that Plaſtick Nature, of which a very excellent Author of our own hath ſpoken ſo much, and written ſo well; in anſwer hereunto, Dr. *Cudworth* Intel. Syſt.

1. *Firſt*, It ſeems very reaſonable to grant, that as there is in Animals a Plaſtick Nature, or an internal moving,

formative Principle, which doth diſpoſe and faſhion all the parts of the *Fœtus*; ſo there is in the Earth too a Plaſtick Nature, or Life by which all Plants and Vegetables are differently form'd, according to their different Seeds; and all this regularly, orderly, methodically, and artificially, according to the diſpoſitions of every Vegetable, and in order to certain Ends and purpoſes which it ſerveth for.

2. But then, *Secondly*, it muſt be granted alſo, that this Plaſtick Nature cannot know or underſtand its Workings, or be conſcious of what it doth; much leſs can it comprehend the reaſons of its Operations; or intend and deſign the Ends, or conſult and deliberate concerning the manner of bringing thoſe Ends about: For theſe are Mental Acts, proper to Creatures Rational, endu'd with Rational Faculties and Powers.

3. And therefore, *Thirdly*, inſtead of deſtroying the Notion of a Deity, the Plaſtick Nature in Animals and Plants, doth inter the exiſtence of an intelligent directing Agent, under which

which, and in ſubſerviency to which, it acteth ſo methodically; like a Labourer that does the drudgery, to act under the Conduct of a wiſe Maſter-Workman. And this is the Notion of that excellent Author ſpoken of; that though Plaſtick Nature doth act artificially for the ſake of Ends, yet it ſelf doth neither intend thoſe Ends, nor underſtand the reaſon of that it doth. Nature is not Maſter of that conſummate Art and Wiſdom according to which it acts, but only a Servant, and a drudging Executioner of the Dictates of it. It acteth not by Choice or Knowledge: Though it be a thing which worketh regularly and uniformly for Ends, and which may be alſo called the Divine Art and Fate of the Corporeal World; yet for all that, it is a low and imperfect Creature, forasmuch as it is not Maſter of that Reaſon and Wiſdom according to which it acts; nor does it properly intend thoſe Ends which it acts for, nor indeed is it expreſly conſcious of what it doth, it not knowing, but only doing according to Commands and Laws impreſt upon it. Neither of which things ought to ſeem ſtrange or incredi-

credible, ſince Nature may as well act regularly and artificially without any Knowledge and Conſciouſneſs of its own, as Forms of Letters compounded together, may print coherent Philoſophick Senſe, though they underſtand nothing at all; and it may alſo act for the ſake of thoſe Ends that are not intended by it ſelf, but an higher Being, as well as the Saw or Hatchet in the Hand of the Architect doth.

This ſhews that whatever the Powers of Nature be, they are all in Obedience and Subſerviency to a ſupreme, wiſe Being, that was the Author of Nature, and hath all along ſince preſerved its Faculties, and is ſtill the principal, ſuperintending Cauſe of all that Decence and Beauty, which giveth ſuch a dazling Luſtre to the whole Creation, and is from Year to Year, from Age to Age maintained in a conſtant, uniform, and undiſturbed State. To ſay that all the comely Parts of the World were ſuch from Eternity, is very abſurd. To ſuppoſe they made themſelves ſuch out of nothing, is nonſenſe: To conceive they were fortuitouſly formed ſuch by the accidental Jumblings, and Sportings,

ings, and Coalition of undeſigning Matter, is equally as unreaſonable: And to fancy they conſtitute ſuch by the like accidental coheſion of thoſe blind Particles of Matter, is a conceit as wild and extravagant as the reſt. Can Chance form a Flower, eſpecially ſuch variety of Flowers, the contexture whereof no Art can expreſs? Can Chance propagate ſo many beautiful Species of them in ſuch a ſteady, conſtant, regular Manner? Can Chance do this that never did any thing that was orderly, uniform, and uninterruptedly Graceful ſince the World ſtood? Could Chance make ſo many Minute Seeds ſo Myſteriouſly, with ſuch Germens, Fibres, and Ramifications, that by the help of a Microſcope you would believe you ſaw the Plant in an Epitome? Can Chance then teach the Seed to ſprout ſo Methodically? Firſt to caſt out a complication of Roots downward, to eſtabliſh its hopeful Off-ſpring in the Ground, and to receive for it a conſtant ſupplement of Vitality; and then to ſhoot upwards into a proportionable Body, with variety of Veſſels to entertain its Nutriment? Can Chance then direct the Plant to cloath it ſelf with proper Integuments? To extend it ſelf into

into divers Branches and Divarications? To cover its Head with Leaves? To adorn thoſe Leaves with Flowers, To which *Solomon*'s Glory was not comparable? And to digeſt and diſperſe the vital Juice into great variety of odoriferous Shapes, Streaks and Colours, ſuch as are inimitable by human Art? And when theſe curious Works are done, Doth Chance inſtruct the florid Creature to reflect upon its mean and poor Beginnings, and as a grateful return to form more Seeds of the ſame Species for another new Generation? Do all theſe orderly and artificial Operations look, as if they proceeded from the fortuitous Motions of irrational, rude and ſtupid Atoms? Are they not rather clear Arguments of the wonderful Skill and Wiſdom of an intelligent Being, that ſuſtains the Faculties, and guides the Operations of plaſtick Nature by a perpetual Law? That is, by an energetick, effective Principle given it by its Maker, whereby Nature works uniformly and ſteadily in ſubſerviency to the Will and Intention of the great Creator, and Preſerver of all things? This is the only intelligible and rational Account that can be given of the Beauty of the Creation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THE next thing to be conſider'd, as a plain Argument of the Exiſtence of a God, is the uſefulneſs of the particular Branches of the Univerſe, and the aptitude of them to anſwer their reſpective Uſes; which I once intended to have made two diſtinct Heads; but upon ſecond Thoughts conceive it better to caſt them together into one. And if it is made appear that the World is ſo artfully framed, that the parts of it tend, and are adapted to ſuch beneficial Purpoſes, as they would and ſhould have been made for, ſuppoſing Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs to have had the framing of them; What can any reaſonable Man conclude, but that they were intended and fitted for thoſe excellent Purpoſes, by the contrivance of a directing, beneficent Being over all; and not jumbled together by the meer lucky compoſitions of unthinking, undeliberating Atoms?

This then muſt be our preſent buſineſs to look into diſtinctions; and becauſe the Subject is Copious and Important

tant, as well as entertaining, it will be neceſſary for us to caſt our Eyes again over this goodly Fabrick, and obſerve the admirable uſefulneſs, as we have hitherto diſcover'd the Order and Beauty of its Structure.

1. To begin then with the heavenly Bodies; whoſe principal End (as I conceive) is, by their Luſtre and Magnificence to ſet forth in ſome meaſure the infinite Greatneſs and Splendor of the Divine Majeſty; being themſelves ſo many faint Rays, or rather (as in this caſe, if I may without abſurdity ſpeak) ſo many Shadows of his Glory. As they relate to this inferior World, they are the great means of Vitality, without which it were impoſſible for any living Creatures to be maintain'd in their Beings; nor would the whole Terraqueous Globe be any thing but dead Rock and Ice. For the prevention of which Havock, they are in their Natures ſo many inexhauſtible Fountains of Fire, that give Light to all ſenſible Creatures, warmth and vegetation to all Animal ſubſtances. This is to be ſaid more eſpecially of that great Luminary the Sun, which Heathens have been wont to worſhip, for the univerſal Good it doth by its enlivening Beams.

Beams. For as it is in its Nature of a comforting, cheriſhing, and quickning Faculty; ſo are its Courſes ſuch as render its Powers every where effectually uſeful. Had it been fixt over any one determinate Part of the Earth in a State unmoveable, it would have been not only uſeleſs, but pernicious unto all things; for as the Parts of the World out of the reach of its Beams, would have been in an eternal State of Darkneſs and Death; ſo the very Regions under the Sun muſt have been parched up, and conſequently deſolate, and uninhabitable by means of thoſe continual Fires, which would have turned all into a kind of Conflagration. Therefore 'tis as neceſſary for the good of the Creation that the Sun ſhould move, as that it ſhould give light and warmth; and that Motion being two-fold; Diurnal finiſh'd in 24 Hours; and Annual performed in 12 Months; all things living receive ſuch vaſt Utilities by both, as argue the Exiſtence of a moſt wiſe and provident Being, whoſe Goodneſs is over all his Works. By the Diurnal Motion of the Sun there are conſtant, ſtated returns of Light and Darkneſs; and by thoſe Viciſſitudes, as all Animals have

have their Time divided between Labour and Reſt (which is as neceſſary for them as Labour, and as their Food which is acquired by Labour, and repairs thoſe Expences of Nature which Labour brings) ſo are thoſe Productions which ſerve for Food, prepared and aſcertained by theſe daily Revolutions. In the Day time the Beams of the Sun ſerve to heat the Ground, to actuate the principles of vegetation, to promote the aſcent of vital Juices, to concoct and ripen Fruits, and to impregnate the Atmoſphere with Fumes and Vapours: And in the Night thoſe Vapours deſcend upon the Ground again in Dews, Showers, or Rains, according to the Neceſſities of the Climate; by which means there is a due Temperament of Warmth and Moiſture that makes all Vegetables Fruitful, and preſerves Animals in a ſtate of Health and Vigour; witneſs thoſe Regions under the Line, where the Sun ſhines the hotteſt; though the Ancients believed they were all roaſted into utter Barreneſs; yet by Diſcoveries which have been made ſince, it appears that the heats and droughts of the Day are ſo allay'd by the conſtant Breezes and Rains of the

the Night, that they are the moſt fertil parts of the World. By the Annual Courſe of the Sun, which carries it about from North to South, and ſo round again, it diſperſeth its vivifick Rays over all, reſtores yearly all the Powers of Nature, makes all People amends for its late diſtance from them, and takes its Circuit ſo, that one Sun ſerves all Climates, and anſwers the Neceſſities of all the World. 'Tis true, ſome places are much more remote from the Sun than others are, as thoſe extreme parts of the Earth call'd, *The Northern* and *Southern Poles*. But then it is to be conſider'd, that the Fruits and Animals of thoſe Countreys are ſuch as do not require ſo great degrees of external Heat. And beſides, there are other Stars which caſt in thoſe parts a more proper, kindly, and (if I may ſo ſpeak) connatural Influence; eſpecially the Moon, of which Luminary it is obſervable, that it is the Sun's Deputy, to ſupply its Room in its abſence; and as the Moon moves further towards the North and South than the Sun ever does, ſo is it fulleſt of Light, and conſequently of enlivening Influences, when the Sun is at the great-

eſt diſtance from it towards the one part or the other; ſo that there is the moſt benefit by the Moon in thoſe Regions, and at thoſe Seaſons of the Year, when and where the Sun is moſt wanting. All which ſhews, that there is a moſt wiſe and beneficent Being over all, who formed the Subſtances of thoſe glorious Luminaries, and directed all their Courſe as he foreſaw would be beſt for the World; becauſe itis impoſſible to conceive rationally how Creatures utterly void of Reaſon and Senſe, (as the Sun and Moon are) cou'd, without the directions of Divine Reaſon, and without the appointment of a Divine Will, pitch upon ſuch regular and proper Motions, that if they had had the higheſt Reaſon of their own, they could not have determined upon better Courſes for the ſervice and good of the Univerſe.

To deſcend now a little lower; every one perceives how uſeful that thin Medium is between Heaven and Earth, which we call the *Air*; how it tranſmits the Light of Heaven to us; how it delights our Ears with many Natural and Artificial Undulations; how

how it helps us with Breath; how it ſupplies us with the ſeaſonable Advantages of Heat and Cold, of Drought and Moiſture; what a Vehicle it is for vaſt variety of uſeful Creatures; and how it openeth its Treaſures to make the whole Earth communicate of its Plenty: And what but a Divine Mind, and an Omnipotent Hand, could have made this Medium of ſuch a neceſſary and fit Contexture, as to anſwer all theſe Purpoſes? Could Fortune and Atoms contrive to breathe into the Noſtrils of every Animal ſuch a common breath of Life? Could they make it fluid, to aſſiſt the flight of every Fowl, and to ſuit with every Vibration of its Wings? Could they ſtore it with Inſects for every Bat and Swallow to live on? Could they give it an agreeable thickneſs to refract the Light, and by thoſe Refractions to bring all Forms, Shapes, and Colours to the Eye in their proper *Idea's*? Could they provide Winds to keep it from Stagnation, and Froſts and Snows, Lightnings and Thunders, to carry off thoſe Impurities which would prove very prejudicial to our Lives? Could they impregnate it with Nitrous Par-

ticles, to make the Blood in an Animals Lungs the more Spirituous? Could they direct it to warm and irrigate the whole Earth, like the Miſt which *Moſes* ſays *went up from the earth* in the beginning, *and watered the whole face of the ground? Gen. 6. 2.* Is it reaſonable to imagine, that ſtupid Matter, and the undirected Motion of diminutive Particles, could contrive or do all theſe wiſe and good things, without the guidance of a ſuper-intending Power, that gave every thing a Law? This were to make ſenſeleſs Matter and Motion capable and conſcious of ſuch Philoſophy as the wiſeſt Philoſophers have ſtood aſtoniſht at in all Ages.

To go on: *They that go down to the ſea in ſhips, and occupy their buſineſs in great waters, theſe men* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſee the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep, Pſalm* 107. 23, 24. How wantonly ſoever ſome conceited Men talk of Atoms falling by Chance into Pebbles and Sands, it ſeems prodigiouſly ſtrange they ſhould believe the whole Ocean alſo to have been made by an accidental Compoſition of them. An Element of ſuch vaſt extent

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and depths, and ſo aptly contriv'd for great ends and uſes, that one would think whoever has but heard of a God, would preſently conclude it to have been form'd by Divine Art and Counſel: For what could it be but Wiſdom that made it a fluid, liquid Heap, to ſerve for Navigation and Traffick into all parts of the World, and for thoſe innumerable Creeping things to move in, which the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, *both ſmall and great Beaſts*, *Pſalm* 104. 25? What could it be but Wiſdom that proportioned out ſuch determinate quantities of Water, ſo great as to ſupply all the Neceſſities of Creatures; not greater to drown them? What could it be but Wiſdom that gathered that lighter Element into Cavities, which by the Laws of its own Nature overflows every denſe and heavy Subſtance? What could it be but Wiſdom that barricado'd up the Sea every where with riſing Shores, Rocks, and Hills, which ſeem to tell the proudeſt Waves in God's own Language, *Hitherto ſhall ye come, and no further?* What could it be but Wiſdom that appointed thoſe reciprocal Motions, the Ebbings and Flowings of the Sea, to

preſerve the Waters from thoſe Corruptions and Stenches to which the great heat of the Sun would otherwiſe make them ſubject; as we ſee in ſtanding Ditches, Pools, and Lakes? What could it be but Wiſdom that ſeaſoned the whole Ocean with Salt, to keep even thoſe Profundities from putrifying which are not ſo violently toſſed to and fro, as the Surface is by the influence of the Moon, eſpecially at the Change and Full? What could it be but Wiſdom that ordered the proportions of Saltneſs ſo, that it is every where diſtributed according to the Neceſſities of the Place and Climate, in more degrees towards the Sea's Bottom, where there is leſs of Motion, and in more ſcanty Meaſures towards the Poles, where there is leſs of Heat? What could it be but Wiſdom that took care that notwithſtanding theſe ſaline Mixtures which are ſo neceſſary and uſeful there, the Ocean ſhould be both the Original and Receptacle of thoſe freſh Waters, which are as neceſſary and uſeful at Land? What could it be but Wiſdom that provided that ſome of the Salt Element ſhould be freſhened in the Air, thence

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to fall down upon the Ground in gentle cheriſhing Showers; and abundance more to be ſweetned in the Veins of Hills, which ſerve to percolate and ſtrein the Waters in their way through variety of Sands and Earths, towards innumerable Fountains, and this with ſuch accuracy, that no Art of Man can ſo effectually take away all that Brackiſhneſs by any Filtres or Diſtillations?

And (now we are come upon firm Land) let us conſider, what could it be but Wiſdom that prepar'd thoſe ſecret Veins in the Earth, through which the Waters of the Seas aſcend to the Tops of Mountains; thence fall down in cryſtal Streams, to fertilize Valleys, and to afford ſalutary Drinks for Men and Beaſts; and at laſt, after all their uſes and ends anſwer'd, return to the Sea again, in a regular courſe of Circulation, like the Circulation of Blood in ſenſitive Creatures, which ſupports Life, and recruits all Vital and Animal Spirits? Certainly that Man muſt have a Mind and Forehead as hard as a Rock of Adamant, that can have the confidence to aſcribe all this wiſe and wonderful Oecono-

my which hath been all along, to nothing but Fortune and Chance, or to the accidental Motion of unthinking, irrational, and ungovern'd Matter.

Diſput. de Deo, 2. Sect. 21. And yet this one thing more is very obſervable, that throughout the whole Earth, the mountainous parts of it are ſo ſituate and exalted, that they ſeem to have been made on purpoſe, and with an intention, the more commodiouſly to relieve all the Regions round about them; and the hotter and dryer thoſe Regions are naturally, the loftier are the Mountains, and the greater plenty of Springs and Streams they have to caſt forth, though the Waters they yield creep up to the Tops of them, againſt the tendency of their own Nature. *Thus* (ſays my Author) *is that hot Quarter of the World* America, *divided by a continued Ledge of Mountains, which run out from South to North, and yield on each ſide towards the Eaſt and Weſt, abundance of great Fountains and Rivers. In like manner is* Africa *divided by* Atlas *and the Mountains of the Moon, out of which on each ſide great Rivers ſpring: And whereas at certain times of the Years, the Winds in thoſe parts throw great ſtore of Moiſture from*

from the Seas upon thoſe Mountains, hence in all likelyhood it is, that the Rivers overflow Africa *at certain Seaſons, as* Nilus *does the Land of* Ægypt. *After the ſame rate is* Aſia *divided from the* Pamphylian *Coaſts to the extreme parts of* India, *by* Taurus, Imaus, Caucaſus, *and other Mountains, which run out by divers Branches about into all parts, whence innumerable famous Rivers run for a long Tract of Miles, into Countries that need them. In* Europe *there are the* Pyrenean *by* Spain, *the* Apennine *in* Italy, *and the* Alps *by* France, *which extend their Arms through ſeveral Nations, and caſt out vaſt Streams of Water, that run far and wide where they are moſt uſeful and neceſſary. And, to conclude the Obſervation, if any Man* (ſays he) *will examine Iſlands, and the leſſer parts of the Earth, he will find, that the Land in every part is higheſt about the middle of the Country, ſo that the neighbouring Plains and Valleys are liberally ſupplied by beneficial Currents.* And what more pregnant Inſtances can any conſiderate Man deſire to convince him of the Exiſtence of a moſt wiſe and provident God? Whereas Chance doth evermore come ſhort of Art, as

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Art it ſelf comes ſhort of Nature; theſe things in Nature are ſo far beyond all, that it is impoſſible with any Colour of Reaſon, to think they proceed from a Cauſe that never underſtood or intended to do good; or to impute them to any thing but Divine Art, Counſel, and Contrivance.

I have taken notice of theſe things the rather, becauſe the Barrenneſs of Hills hath been objected againſt the Doctrine of a Providence, which (if the thing ſuppos'd were in Fact true) would be a very poor Argument, becauſe the Utilities already mention'd, abundantly compenſate for the ſuppoſed Sterility. But after all, the Suppoſition it ſelf cannot hold: For the mountainous parts of the Earth are in divers accounts as neceſſary as the richeſt Soils; and perhaps would be found as advantageous, if Art and Induſtry were employed to make Experiments. I do not ſpeak only in reference to Culture, but moreover in reſpect of thoſe latent Treaſures, Quarries, Minerals, Metals, Gemms, and the like; which have occaſion'd that Notion among ſome Naturaliſts, That the more ungrateful any Country is on the Surface,

face, the richer are its Bowels; which is ſtill an Argument of the Exiſtence of a moſt wiſe Being, that made Mankind not to ſtand ſtill a ſtaring about the World, but ſome way or other to take Pains in it.

As for the other parts of the Earth, the Utilities of them are ſo various and manifeſt, that notwithſtanding the moſt comfortable Notions we have of a better World, few People are very willing to leave this. We ſee how the Creatures about us ſerve to good ends, and how ſerviceable they are in their Tendencies and Effects. Herbs, Fruits, Animals, all are uſeful, as for the Beauty and Preſervation of this inferiour World, ſo for the Good of Man, the nobleſt part of it. Some things ſerve for our Food, and ſome for our Cloathing; ſome for Nutriment, and ſome for Medicinal Operations; ſome for our Employments and Labours, and ſome for our Eaſe; ſome for our Neceſſities, and ſome for our more comfortable Subſiſtence; ſome to gratifie our Senſes, and ſome to exerciſe our Reaſon: ſome which miniſter to our Convenience, and ſome which even humour us in our Pleaſures and Diverſi-

verſions. Now all this ſhews, that there is a moſt wiſe and benign Agent which preſideth over all, and directeth every thing for Good; becauſe Creatures which are void of Rational Faculties cannot be ſuppoſed to operate of their own choice, according to the Laws of Reaſon and Goodneſs, nor to intend, or deſign, or underſtand Ends; which yet they ſeem to proſecute ſo effectually, as if they had Reaſon and Goodneſs of their own to guide them. And therefore it is moſt reaſonable to grant, that there is a ſuperiour intelligent Being, who formed and intended them for their ſeveral Uſes, and preſerves their Power ſo that they may anſwer the Uſes they were made for. 'Tis true, there may be many things in the World whoſe uſes we are as yet very ignorant of: But it will not thence follow that they are ſuperfluous, and to no good purpoſe at all: For this Ignorance proceeds either from want of Capacity in our Underſtandings, which cannot open all the Myſteries, nor comprehend all the Intrigues of Nature at once; or elſe from want of due Care and Diligence in making enquiries into them. And this

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is an Argument not of any Defect in the Contrivance it ſelf, nor of want of Forecaſt and Skill in the Contriver, but of the greatneſs of that Art and Wiſdom, which thus eſcapes our dull and narrow Faculties, till Time and Experience helps us. There are divers Plants, which in former Ages have been eſteem'd noxious, and of ill effect, and yet have been found to be very wholſom and kind to our Natures. And though there be divers Animals which are abhorr'd as Venomous, and which Vulgar People think might be well ſpared out of the World, yet we muſt not think but that they were deſign'd and fitted for good Purpoſes; partly to take off thoſe Qualities in the Air and Earth, which would be prejudicial to the Lives of Man and Beaſt; and then to digeſt thoſe Qualities by the Chymiſtry of Nature, to alter them ſo, that in the end they prove not only ſafe but vital; witneſs the Viper, out of which the skilful Apothecary can prepare as well a pleaſant as a ſalutary Cordial. Therefore, as when we go into an Artificers Shop, and obſerve variety of Inſtruments, the uſes whereof we do not underſtand,

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it would be folly to imagine, that thoſe Inſtruments were not contrived by a good Artiſt, nor were intended for good Ends, though we ſee them uſed, and have in truth nothing to ſay, but that we our ſelves are unacquainted with the Art; ſo when we view this great Shop of Nature, and find there ſome Creatures, whoſe proper and particular uſes we do not preſently perceive, it would be great Weakneſs to conclude thence, that they were not formed by a wiſe Hand, nor ſerve to wiſe Ends. For the only reaſon why their ſpecial Utilities do not appear, is becauſe our own Faculties are ſo limited, and our Experience ſo ſhort, that we do not underſtand all the Methods and Arts of Nature, nor every Purpoſe which that ſuperintending Being aims at, in whoſe Hand Nature is, and in ſubſerviency to whoſe Wiſdom Nature operates. Rather we ſhould believe that nothing is in vain; and that the Divine Purpoſes are fulfilled, though we do not diſcern the effect in every Inſtance: For the great Ends to which many parts of the World ſerve, are ſo palpable and plain, that (as an excellent Writer

Dr. *Barrow*, Vol. 2. Serm. 2.

ter ſpeaks) Reaſon obligeth us to ſuppoſe the like of the reſt, though perhaps we diſcern not the uſe of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect. Even as a Perſon whom we obſerve frequently to act with great Conſideration and Prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his Proceedings, we muſt yet imagine that he hath ſome latent Reaſon, ſome reach of Policy, that we are not aware of. Or, as in an Engine conſiſting of many parts curiouſly combin'd, whereof we do perceive the general uſe, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, Reaſon prompts us (although we neither ſee them all, nor can comprehend the immediate ſerviceableneſs of ſome) to think they are all ſome way or other ſubſervient to the Artiſt's Deſign. Such an Agent is God, the Wiſdom of whoſe Proceedings being in ſo many Inſtances notorious, we ought to ſuppoſe it anſwerable in the reſt: And ſuch an Engine is the World; of which we may eaſily enough diſcover the general End, and how many of its Parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reaſon but ſuppoſe the reſt of their

their kind alike congruous, and conducible to the ſame purpoſe. Our Incapacity to diſcover all, doth not argue any defect, but an exceſs of Wiſdom in the Deſign thereof: Not too little Perfection in the Work, but too great an one rather in reſpect to our Capacity.

Having thus conſider'd the uſefulneſs of thoſe ends, which the things here about us are ſubſervient for, let us in the next place obſerve the uſefulneſs of their Structure in order to thoſe ends; which will further demonſtrate the wonderful Wiſdom of God above all the Powers of ſenſeleſs Matter and blind Fortune.

And here to deſcribe the Fabrication of all the things which are obvious to the Eye, would be a Task in vain for me to attempt, and impoſſible to go through; ſo manifold are the Works of God, and ſo hidden is the Exquiſiteneſs and Elegance of their Contexture. It may therefore ſuffice to inſtance only in two ſorts of Creatures; Trees and Animals; ſome Account whereof will ſerve as a ſhort Specimen. whereby we may judge a little of the admirable Wiſdom of the Di-

Divine Mind, that hath ſo fitly and curiouſly contrived his Creatures for their reſpective ends.

1. Now the immediate Tendencies of Nature in every Tree are twofold, partly for the ſuſtenance of the individual Plant, and partly for the increaſe of its Species or Kind. And accordingly the Powers and Faculties of Nature are of two ſorts; ſome for Nouriſhment, and ſome for Semination. For the accompliſhment of which ends, it cannot but affect us to conſider how artificially the Vegetative Soul works, as if it were endued with Reaſon and Policy; which (becauſe it is utterly void of) ſhews, that there is an Underſtanding Being over it, which doth direct and govern its Operations. There is, firſt, the Original Vehicle of Life, the Root, protended round about into the Bowels of the Earth, that through a Circle of innumerable Strings, as it were through Meſeraick Veſſels, it may ſuck up a ſpirituous Sap into an umbelical Receptacle, whence Nature doth methodically direct a Series of long porous Fibres all along the Trunk to each Arm and Twig, to each Joynt and Bud. Now the Uſe and Office

of theſe Formations is diſcernible by their Effects, though they be hidden and fine in their Contexture, and myſterious as to the manner of their Operations. For, as in the radical Parts, Nature draws and receives its proper Nouriſhment, ſo by theſe it conveys and diſtributes it into all places, digeſting it ſtill in the way, the groſſeſt Matter into Wood, the finer Particles into Leaves, and the more ſpirituous into Bloſſoms: And (as if Nature ſtudiouſly and deſignedly provided not only for Neceſſaries, but againſt Accidents alſo) for the more effectual diſtribution of its Bounty, the Tree is cloath'd with a firm outward Bark, to defend its Life from extremities of Weather, and with a ſoft Rind within, to facilitate the aſcent of the tender Juice. Theſe Proviſions being made for the preſervation and growth of the Tree, the Seeds, which ſerve for the increaſe of its Species, follow. And theſe, for their greater ſafety, are accurately incloſed, ſome in a Vinous Liquor, others in a tough Membrane, others in a ſpungy Husk, others in a hard Shell, others in a pulpy Subſtance, according to the quality of the Ve-

Vegetable, whether it be better or worſe, as the condition of the Seed is, whether hardy or tender, and as the Weather may prove, either ſevere or temperate; and as the Seaſon is to be for the Maturity of the Fruit, whether Summer or Autumn, Nature ſeems in all its Operations to foreſee to and forecaſt, and to conſult, and to provide very carefully for the beſt; and yet it is a thing without any Underſtanding of its own; it moves with no more Deliberation or Thought than the Tide does. This is a plain Argument that there is an intelligent Agent over it, that firſt created it with its enlivening and forming Powers, and doth continually uſe it as an Inſtrument in his Hand, to act according to the directions of his incomprehenſible Wiſdom; becauſe otherwiſe 'twere unconceivable how an irrational Principle could of it ſelf deſign beneficial ends; how it could project an artificial Method to bring thoſe Ends about; how it could make choice of ſuitable and proper means; how it could fit and connect all thoſe means together ſo, that one thing ſerves in order to another, to aſſiſt and promote its Opera-

tions; and all of them to be ſo critically and accurately ſerviceable in order to the main end. Theſe wonderful Contrivances ſpeak Council and Art in the higheſt degree, and therefore impoſſible to belong to ſenſeleſs and undeliberating Matter, which is utterly uncapable of knowing both how to aim at uſeful purpoſes, and how to frame or order any thing of it ſelf, after an uſeful manner; but goes on neceſſarily in a dark Road, as it is conducted, manag'd, and directed by a moſt wiſe Being, that is over it, and commands it by a perpetual Law.

2. To Creatures indued with Life only, as Trees and other Plants are, the next in Dignity of Nature are Animals, or Creatures indued with Life and Senſe too. Now in them, the only tendency of Nature which is proper for me to take notice of here, is their own preſervation. In order whereunto theſe Three things are neceſſary. 1. A conſtant ſupply of Nouriſhment within. 2. A diſtinct perception of all outward Objects, that are either agreeable, or injurious to Nature. 3. A due perfection and fitneſs in the Structure of the whole Body. And if we would

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conſider with uncaptivated Minds, the ſtupendious contrivances which are in the Fabrick of every ſenſitive Creature, and eſpecially in the frame of our own Bodies, in order to the preſervation of Nature, we ſhould not need any plainer Evidences of a Deity, than thoſe we carry continually about us. It is commonly noted of *Galen*, that renowned Phyſician among the Old *Pagans*, That though he was no great Friend to the Religion of thoſe times, yet he was throughly convinced that there is a God, and that God is a Being of abſolute Goodneſs, of unſearchable Wiſdom, and of inſuperable Power. Which hearty acknowledgment he was led unto by obſerving the uſeful Frame and Diſpoſition of the World; and particularly the great uſefulneſs of the parts of Animals: On which Subject he wrote thoſe excellent Books of his, which are ſo deſervedly celebrated. Therefore ſince Contemplations of this kind tend to ſuch Divine Purpoſes, I hope I ſhall not be thought to go out of my Profeſſion, if I take the curſory view of the Structure of humane Bodies, in reference to thoſe Three things, Nutrition, Perception and Organization, which ſo neceſ-

ſarily and appoſitely tend to the preſervation of each Individual.

Scepticks have been ever puzled, how from their own odd Principles to give the leaſt tolerable account of the formation of an Animal; ſo various are its Parts, and all ſo admirable for their Contexture, Poſition, Figure, Shape and peculiar Offices, that indeed it would be ridiculous to attempt a Solution of the whole Structure from the improvident ſtrokes of rude, ſtupid, and undirected Matter. To inſtance, 1. Firſt in thoſe Parts which ſerve for Nutrition, every one hath a Mouth ready prepared to receive his Food; a Palate to diſtinguiſh what is moſt agreeable; Teeth to cut and chew that which is ſolid; Salival Veſſels to aſſiſt the maceration of that which is dry; Muſcles at the Roots of the Tongue, to precipate the Food when throughly broken and commixt; a ſoft Tube, or Gullet made up of divers Coats, and variety of Fibres to convey it down; and a capacious Stomach to ferment, concoct and digeſt it into fluent Chyle. To keep the Aliment from running out of its Elaboratory before due Concoction, the lower Orifice of the Stomach is provided

ded with a Circle of Fibres, which they call a Sphincter to knit it up a little, till ſufficient Fermentation tranſmits the Chyle by a gentle aſcent into the Bowels. To help Nature in its chymical Operations, the Heart is placed above the Stomach, the Pancreas below, the Liver on the Right-Side, the Spleen on the Left; all to promote Digeſtion and Expulſion, by joynt Miniſtrations of Heat from all Parts round about, and by a particular Miniſtration of an acid Humour (as ſome conceive) from the Spleen. Then for the Diffuſion of the elaborated Matter, the ſame Divine Art which contrived the Parts preparatory, hath provided further Conveyances; that is, a Series and Duct of Entrails; which, though they be of great lengths, lye round in the Belly, with turnings and windings, in Complications and Circumvolutions, that by the long and gradual Progreſs of the Juice intended for Vitality, and by new Fermentations of it in its way, it may be the better ſeparated from the feculent and groſſer Subſtance. And here we meet with a new, wonderful Idea; the Meſentery, as it's called by Anatomiſts; meaning a moſt curious Net-work of

Walæus de Motu Chyli, Epiſt. 1.

innumerable, porous Strings, which faſten the Entrails together in a Circle, and with their gaping Orifices devour and drink up the ſpirituous Chyle throughout its Paſſage. Thence being convey'd through thoſe fomenting Parts, and ſpungy Kernels, the Glandules, the Supplement of Life, is by the conſtant Motions of the Diaphragm forced and drawn upwards again, but in a new way, ſome into the Liver, ſome into other Veſſels, but moſtly into a common Receptacle, like a little Lake; whence it is carried on ſtill further upwards towards the Neck, there to be diſcharged into a great Vein, or Canal of Blood. This conſtant courſe of the Chyle, prepared in the Stomach, and conducted through ſo many Veſſels, was not diſcovered ſo exactly, and particularly till ſome late Criticks in Anatomy made the ſtricteſt ſearch. And though it may ſeem to lie out of a Divines way, yet becauſe the Speculation is ſo uſeful and important in the Conſequence, as well as diverting in it ſelf; I ſhall for once venture upon it a little further. That milky Subſtance, the Chyle, being now commixt, and ſwimming with the Blood, is inſtantly

Wilæus, Ibid.

ſtantly tranſmitted into the Right-Ventricle of the Heart, there (as ſome have thought) to be turned into perfect Blood of the form of its Vehicle. Thence it runs through a Chanel into the Lungs, there to be enriched by impregnating Particles from the Air; whence it takes a circuit back again into the Left-Ventricle of the Heart; where being inſtantly Sublimated, and made highly Spirituous, it is ejected thence up into a great Artery, which by innumerable Branches conveys it ſpeedily over the whole Body; there by the aſſiſtance and ſupply of more Spirits from the Nerves, to warm and comfort, to enliven and invigorate, to feed and nouriſh the ſeveral Parts; and ſo the remainder returns to be ſupplied with freſh Chyle to the Heart again, through Veins, which though they be numberleſs, yet is the Circulation ſo quick that the Blood goes through the Heart (as a very learned Phyſician hath computed it) no leſs than thirty times within the compaſs of and Hour. This I take to be the ſhort account of Nutrition, eſpecially in Man; wherein if there be any ſlight miſtake, I ſubmit to the Judgment of thoſe of the noble Faculty

Dr. *Lower*, de Corde.

culty and Profeſſion, whoſe buſineſs it is to underſtand it much better.

And now conſidering the admirable uſefulneſs of all thoſe Parts which ſerve to theſe vital Purpoſes, I would ask any reaſonable Perſon, Whether meer Chance, or blind Matter, or any thing elſe without the Skill and Providence of a moſt wiſe Being, could contrive ſuch artificial and wonderful Methods, Conveyances, Inſtruments, and Veſſels of ſuch various Sorts; and all ſo curiouſly Formed, ſo orderly Diſpoſed, and ſo exquiſitely Connected and Fitted, to bring about ſuch neceſſary and excellent Ends? If it be ſaid, That all theſe things are done by Common, Animal Nature; 'tis eaſily anſwered, That Nature, of its ſelf, is without all Underſtanding, utterly uncapable of Foreca ſt, or Cogitation; and therefore ſhews that there is an intelligent Being over it, that erected and ordered the buſineſs of Nutrition, which common Nature never knew either how to perfect and finiſh, or how to begin; nor indeed doth humane Reaſon it ſelf help to carry it on. As for inſtance; A Man deliberates indeed what he ſhall eat, and what he ſhall drink; for theſe are Objects which fall

fall under Conſultation, or, at leaſt, Fancy. But when once his Nutriment is caſt down into the Stomach, there is an end of all deliberation, as to the manner of Digeſtion, and of turning the digeſted Matter into Blood and Spirits. In the whole Oeconomy of this Affair, Reaſon, hath not the leaſt Hand; nor did any Man ever yet conſider how he ſhould convert his Food into Chyle, or convey it from the Stomach to the Meſentery; or how he ſhould there ſeparate it, and ſo carry it to the Heart. The greateſt Politician in the World never yet thought of managing this Intrigue. Nature indeed does the thing to his Hand: But becauſe that Principle of Life, which we call Nature, is utterly void of all Policy and Thought, we muſt rationally conclude that there is a Being of excellent Knowledge and Wiſdom (that is, a Deity) which hath contrived theſe Operations for Nature, and hath directed and fixt the Methods of them. If it be ſaid again that Nature operates thus in a Mechanical way, by forcing and thruſting on the Chyle and Blood, like the Art and Method uſed in Water-works; it may be very reaſonably demanded, Who invented

vented this Art for Nature? Who at firſt put that unintelligent and blind thing upon it? And what Hand prepared that ſtupendious Courſe and Inſtruments it was to uſe, in order to the Animal's Nutrition? Nay, who contrived the Animal it ſelf, and deſigned the Nouriſhment of it? Or, if theſe Queſtions be not enough, we may very well ask the great Pretenders to Reaſon one more; *viz.* How the Circulation of the Blood, which is ſo Demonſtrable is ſo conſtantly performed, and ſo quickly finiſh'd in its periodical Courſe? For here the greateſt Artiſts are divided in their Opinions, whether the reduction of the Blood to the Heart through the Veins be by the inoſculation of the Veins and Arteries (an Opinion which ſeems to be out of Doors) or, by the poroſities of the fleſhy Parts; or by the ſyſtaltick Motion (as ſome call it) in the Veins themſelves? As to this, Men of the beſt Skill are yet to ſeek how to give a clear and ſatisfactory Account of the manner of the Circulation of the Blood, though the Circulation it ſelf be apparent; which to me is an Argument, that the whole Method of Nutrition in us was inſtituted, and is ſtill carried

Diſp. de Deo. p. 462.

carried on by a Divine Being, which hath made ſome things undiſcoverable by humane Art; that by the Myſteries we find in Nature, we may be the more eaſily prevailed on to believe the ſublimeſt Truths in Religion.

2. Having thus obſerved the Firſt thing which tends to the preſervation of that Nature which is common to Man and Beaſt, the work of Nutrition that is performed in the Bowels: Let us in the next place conſider briefly the Second thing, or the Buſineſs of Senſation that is performed in the Head; both inwardly in the Fancy, and outwardly by the Inſtruments of Senſation, as the Eye, the Ear, and the like, which convey to the Fancy all ſenſible Objects from abroad. And here I muſt not be ſo vain as to pretend to give a diſtinct, accurate, and full account of all the operations of Nature, and of its hidden means, and manner of Working. No, it is enough for one of my Profeſſion to take ſuch a ſummary notice of thoſe things which ſerve for Senſation, as may ſatisfie any reaſonable Perſon, that the whole Work of Senſation argues wonderful Wiſdom and Contrivance; and conſequently the Exiſtence

Exiſtence of a God. The Fancy then is the higheſt and moſt perfect Faculty of the Animal Soul (as the Underſtanding is of the Rational.) An imagining, directing Power in every ſenſitive Creature, carrying in its Acts ſome faint reſemblances of humane Reaſon, though it be quite deſtitute of it, and much inferiour to it. Its Seat is in the Brain; and its Uſes are ſo great and neceſſary, that without it no Animal can anſwer the Inclinations and Purpoſes of its Nature. By this Faculty the Creature receives within it the Idea's, and Repreſentations of exteriour Objects; perceives ſo much of their Qualities as exerts its Appetites, and in (ſome ſort, after an obſcure, imperfect manner, and in an unreflecting way) judgeth of things, whether they be Pleaſant or Painful, Convenient or Diſagreeable, Beneficial or Deſtructive; in ſhort, whether they be for its Enjoyment, or for its Hurt. And according as thoſe Impreſſions are, which are thus made upon the Fancy, ſo does the Creature act; either craving for the Object, or declining it; either embracing, or abhorring; either purſuing, or avoiding it; and either gra-

gratified with the Fruition, or grieving under the Pain which the Object affords. So that as the Heart is the Spring of all vital Motion; ſo is the Fancy the Spring of all animal Motions, both inward and external. Now, Can any reaſonable Man believe, that this ſo uſeful a Faculty came accidentally into the Soul, meerly by nonſenſical Combination of undeſigning Atoms? Does it not rather ſhew, that the Animal was endued with it by a wiſe Agent, that conſtituted and aimed at its Preſervation? Eſpecially if it be conſidered, that as it is a diſtinguiſhing Faculty in every Individual, whereby it perceives the difference between what is Good for it, or Injurious to it; ſo in every Species of Animals it is various; and yet, notwithſtanding, that variety works in every one of the ſame kind after an uniform Manner. For that Object which is delightful to one ſort of Animals, another is averſe to; and whether it be deſired or refuſed by one Individual, it is alike deſired or refuſed by all of the ſame Species; which is a plain Argument that it was not Chance, but Divine Reaſon which formed that Internal Senſe, the Fancy.

In

In the next place, let us take ſome (though it be but a tranſient) view of the Inſtruments, which are aſſiſtant and miniſterial to tranſmit Impreſſions from without, to that Organ of the Soul, where this diſtinguiſhing Power, the Fancy is plac'd. Thoſe Inſtruments are of two ſorts, Nerves and Spirits. The Nerves or Sinews reſemble ſo many hollow, winding Pipes, thro' which all Idea's and Notions of things abroad are convey'd to the Senſe within. The original Complication and Bed of the Nerves is in the interiour Fabrick of the Brain, dividing there that ſoft, artificial Structure of Nature into divers Cells or Apartments, whence the great Branches of thoſe Inſtruments of Senſation are extended outwardly thro' the Head by Pairs. That in each Ear ſerves to open a Paſſage to the Fancy for all ſorts of Sounds, according to the various Motions and Modifications of the Air. That Nerve in each Eye ſerves to let in the Idea's and Shapes of all viſible Objects. Thoſe which extend toward the lower parts of the Face, are to admit all kinds of Smells, and by variety of Ramifications, to govern the

the Taſte, to move the Tongue in all its Vibrations, to aſſiſt the Lips, the Jaw, and all the Organs there, which help towards Nutrition. Others Divarications are into the Lungs and Windpipe, to preſerve Reſpiration, to modulate the Voice, and to ſerve for the Ejection of whatſoever is offenſive to that ſenſible Fabricature. Others ſtrike down into the Stomach and Heart, to promote all Motions and Operations there. Others run lower, to be ſerviceable to the Bowels and Meſentery, that they may diſcharge their Functions. Others to the Liver, to the Reins, and to all the parts in their Neighbourhood. And others down the Neck to the exteriour parts of the Body, ſo that by innumerable ſtreight, circular, and oblique Branches, all over the Body, to the very Soul of the Foot; they are inſinuated into all the Muſcular Formations, which ſerve to move every Limb, Member, Joynt, and Particle.

And yet all this wonderful Plexure of Nerves would be of no real uſe, without the help of active, lively Spirits to invigorate all. And for the Extraction of theſe out of the Blood, provident Nature hath prepar'd (tho'

not by any Providence of its own) peculiar Elaboratories in the Brain. As thoſe Spirits which ſerve directly for the Ends and Uſes of Life (and are therefore call'd Vital) are produced in the Region below; ſo are thoſe Spirits which ſerve for Senſe and Motion, (and are therefore call'd *Animal Spirits*) chymically prepar'd in that Supreme Region, which is the Seat of Senſation, the great Organ and Original of all thoſe Motions which are in the ſeveral parts of the Body. There thoſe Miniſters of Nature are continually imployed in their various Ranks and Functions; nay in their ſeveral Cells too, that they may not diſturb or interfere with one another in their reſpective Operations: And there, like Centinels about a Garriſon, they are upon the Watch, to give the Fancy notice from their ſeveral Diviſions and Diſtricts, of whatever may prove either grateful or offenſive to Nature. Thoſe in the Optick Tubes in the Eyes, convey all lucid Idea's to the Fancy: Thoſe in the Hollow, and about the Drum of the Ear, all ſorts of Sounds: Thoſe in the Palate and Noſtrils, every Taſte and Odour; and thoſe diſperſed about in Nerves

Nerves and Fibres over all the Body ſerve to convey the Senſe of all Pain, or Pleaſure; beſides the manifold, ſtupendendious, and unaccountable Offices they do, both for the exterior parts, in order to all Muſcular, and local Motion; and for all the inward Veſſels, in order to vitality.

And here I cannot well omit what an inquiſitive Author hath obſerved, touching that mutual Relation, and neceſſary Commerce, which is between the Brain, and thoſe inferiour parts which are for the Ends and Operations of Life: For though every Part by it ſelf be form'd with moſt exquiſite Art for the Offices and Functions it is to perform, yet no part can anſwer its Ends, without the ſubſervient Miniſtery and Aſſiſtance of others. Thus, unleſs the Heart ſupply the Head with Blood, it is impoſſible for the Brain either to produce Animal Spirits, or to ſuſtain it ſelf. Again; If the Brain did not pay a Tribute of Spirits to the Heart, 'twere impoſſible for the Heart to prepare that Blood. Again; Neither can the one prepare Blood, nor the other Spirits, unleſs the Stomach provides Chyle, and the Lungs

Diſput. de Deo, p. 479.

Nitre. Nor again, can either Lungs or Stomach perform their Offices, unleſs both parts receive from Heart and Brain, Blood and Spirits. Since, therefore, in the whole Labyrinth of this Contexture there is ſuch admirable Excellence, and Curioſity of Contrivance, each part ſo exquiſitely form'd in it ſelf, and all ſo intimately depending upon one another, Good Lord! what could have been more wiſely, more advantageouſly, more artificially, more divinely deſigned and ordered?

And to confirm this yet further, it will not be amiſs to conſider tranſiently the wonderful Art of Nature in contriving the firſt principal Inſtruments of Nutrition and Senſation both. All we ſee depends upon Nouriſhment; and that is ſought for by thoſe Cravings in the Stomach which we call Hunger and Thirſt. Now here lyeth a Myſtery, how we come to be ſenſible of theſe great Wants below? The immediate Cauſes of Appetite are allowed to be in the Stomach it ſelf; and ſuppoſe it to proceed from an Acid Humour there, which agitates and frets the Fibres upon Emptineſs, yet the

the Enquiry is, How the Head comes to be ſenſible of theſe Cravings? Or, How and by what means it is that the Fancy in the Brain is affected with theſe Cravings in the Stomach, ſo that we feel and know the Neceſſities of Nature, which muſt be anſwer'd, or elſe the whole Fabrick will fall to the Ground? Why, the true Account is this; That there are immediate Inſtruments between the Stomach and the Brain, which convey to the Fancy the Senſe of thoſe Neceſſities which are below; I mean little Nerves, or porous Strings, which, (by the help of Animal Spirits within them) move the Fancy above, as they themſelves are moved by the Vellications or Twitchings of the Fibres beneath. On theſe poor Inſtruments the whole Being and Welfare of every Senſitive Creature doth originally depend; and ſo I would ask any Rational Creature, Whether the Formation of thoſe Inſtruments in every Animal, could be the effect of blind Chance, or is not rather an Argument of the moſt wonderful Reaſon and Wiſdom, (that is, a Deity) directing and governing the Works of Nature after ſuch a ſtupendious manner,

and to ſuch providential Ends and Purpoſes, for the preſervation of every Animal's Nature?

3. And this leads me to conſider now the Third thing which tendeth thereunto, and expoſeth to our View the great Wiſdom and Contrivances of a a God; namely the due perfection and Fitneſs which is in the Structure of a Senſitive Creature's Body, I mean ſtill in order to its own Preſervation, or to the Support of the Individual. And here it paſſeth my little Skill, and perhaps the greateſt Skill of all the moſt inquiſitive Men upon Earth, to give you a diſtinct particular View of every wiſe Work. Therefore it will be enough for me to give you a rough Draught, an imperfect Specimen and Idea.

And, to ſpeak firſt of the uſeful, perfect, and fit Fabrication of the Head, that great Fort of Nature, which is provided like a Citadel on high, for the defence and ſafety of all the other Works: There we find ſuch Excellence in the Frame, ſuch Art in the Contrivance, and ſuch variety of Uſes throughout the whole Building, as plainly

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ſhews the Hand and Wiſdom of a Divine Architect; as an hairy Scalp, to keep all the interiour Parts in due warmth; a Skull, to guard them from violence; a tough Membrane over it, to help the making of Reparation for acts of Battery; another Membrane they call the *Pia Mater*, within, to Coat the Nerves, to divide the Brain into Partitions, and to keep the volatile Spirits at home, to do their proper Offices for Senſe, Life, and Motion: There we find too, innumerable Branches of Arteries, to carry Blood all over for the Suſtenance of every Part, and for the extracting of Spirits; as many Branches of Veins alſo, to carry off the phlegmatick Matter left, that it may be invigorated anew; Glandules, like ſo many Spunges, to drink up ſuperfluous Moiſtures, and to caſt them into their reſpective Sinks; beſides an intricate Series of Nerves, which I ſpake of before, divaricated round about, and laid, like Pipes, in their proper Cavities, to help Senſation from abroad. Of theſe, if we take ſome notice of one only, it will enable us to conceive ſomething the better of the artificial Contrivance of the reſt, I

mean the Nerve Optick, that ſerves to convey the Species of all viſible Objects, into the Brain. It is inſerted into the Bulb of the Eye a little ſideways, or in an oblique Poſture, as moſt convenient for clear Viſion. Thence it ſpreads it ſelf into Ramifications infinite, partly into thoſe various Branches which aſſiſt the ſix Muſcles of the Eye, that it may move ſix ſeveral ways, to receive Impreſſions from all Objects, and partly into a vaſt variety of Fibres, which make various Coats; all of them tranſparent, and without any Tincture (outwardly) of their own, to let in Light and Colours in their proper Idea's, that Viſion may be the more diſtinct and clear, and that the Fancy may not be deceived. The exteriour or horny Coat is made of a Convex Figure, to admit Rays from all parts round about. In the ſecond or Uveous Coat, is the Pupil, commonly called the Sight of the Eye; a round and narrow part, provided for the gathering of the Rays into a Concourſe; and about this Pupil is the *Iris*, made up of Ciliary Proceſſes, like a Circle of the fineſt Hairs; by the Motion of which Fibres, the Sight of the Eye is

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ſometimes contracted, and at other times dilated, according as the ſplendid Object is near or remote, or as the Splendor it ſelf is greater or leſſer. Beſides theſe, is that they ſtile the *Retiform* Coat (becauſe it reſembles the moſt curious Net-work) next to the Viſionary Nerve, ſomewhat capacious, to give room for the neceſſary Proportions of the Idea; and of a dark Colour round about within, to prevent the Reflexion of the Light: And within theſe various Coats are various Humours, which ſerve ſo artificially to refract all the incident Rays, and to tranſmit the Species of every viſible Object to the Fancy in a regular Form, that in all Ages the Structure of this little Member, the Eye, hath been to the Admiration and Aſtoniſhment of the beſt Anatomiſts.

Now by this we may gueſs at the wonderful Structure of thoſe other Inſtruments, which ſerve for Senſation in the Head. And if we deſcend lower, What a World of Wonders do we meet with there? Were I to inſtance only in the Contexture of the Hand, 'twere enough to ſhew the Exiſtence of a God. How uſeful is this outward Member to defend the Senſes, and to preſerve

preſerve the very Life of Man; it being employ'd about all Works, and exerciſing all Arts that ſerve for our Neceſſities and Convenience, and even for our Humour and Curioſity? *Galen* and others have particularly obſerved the artificial Fabrication of the Hand, and the wonderful fitneſs of all Things in it for their ſeveral Uſes; the fit Proportion and Diſpoſition of it to lay hold on any Objects whether great or ſmall; the fit Diviſion and Number of the Fingers; the fit Magnitude, Quantity, Variety and the Figure of the Bones; the fit Numbers and Filletings of the Joynts; the fitneſs of the Muſcles, Tendons and Nerves, for the moving and turning of the Hand every way as occaſion requires; the fitneſs of the Fleſh, Skin, and the very Nails, for their reſpective Offices; and upon the whole they conclude, that no Art could poſſibly have contrived this Member better, or more appoſitely for its Uſes; and that great Inconveniencies muſt have followed, had any thing in it been otherwiſe than juſt as every thing is.

If now with this Hand you diſſect the Lungs of an Animal, you may ſee the ſtupendious Wiſdom and Skill that

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is ſhewn in the contrivance of that whole pendulous Fabrick; for the drawing in, and digeſting the nitrous Particles of the Air; for the diſperſing of it into every Lobe and leſſer Receptacle; for reſpiration by the alternate ſhrinking and ſtretching of the Fibres there; for conveying Blood out of the Heart, and back again into it; for governing and modulating the Voice; for keeping the Wind-pipe continually open by circular Cartilages, or Griſles; and for defending it by a muſcular Membrane at the Roots of the Tongue, which upon occaſion ſhuts down like a Clap-door to keep every thing but Air from deſcending into the Lungs.

To your Fingers ends you feel the pulſations of the Heart, on which depends the Circulation of the Blood, that is the immediate Spring and Prop of Life. And did you diſtinctly perceive the manner of its quick courſe from the Heart round to the Heart again: Did you ſee the texture of the Arteries, which ſerve to carry it off; the intricate paſſages of it, even through the little Cavities of the Bones; the Force whereby it is propelled and driven on forward upon every new pulſation;

tion; the watery Particles which drop into it by the way to thin it, and thereby to aſſiſt its Motion: Thoſe Veſſels they call the Glandules and Lymphæducts, out of which thoſe watery Particles are derived; the conveyances by which it runs out of the Arteries into innumerable Veins, and little branches of Veins; the Valves in them which keep it from flowing back; the frame and windings of thoſe Canals, which lead it on to the Heart; the opening of the Heart to receive it, when 'tis come to the Door of the Right-Ventricle; and thoſe muſcular Membranes, the Valves, which are ſo artificially provided to open forward into that Ventricle to let the Blood in, and then ſhut to like Trap-doors, to hinder the Blood from Recoyling the ſame way; Did you, I ſay, diſtinctly perceive all this myſterious Proceſs and Structure, no more would be needful to make you ſenſible of the great Reaſons which the holy *Pſalmiſt* had for thoſe Expreſſions, *Pſal.* 139. 14. *O Lord, I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my ſoul knoweth right well.*

Beſides

Beſides theſe Miracles of Divine Wiſdom within us, I might lead you on to a further view of the various Fortifications of Nature, which are more outward: A Structure of Six hundred ſeveral Muſcles; in each whereof are at leaſt Ten ſeveral Intentions, or due Qualifications to be obſerved; proper Figures, juſt Magnitude, right Diſpoſition of its ſeveral Ends, upper and lower poſition of the Whole, the inſertion of its proper Nerves, Veins, and Arteries, which are each of them to be duly placed; ſo that about the Muſcles alone, no leſs then Six thouſand ſeveral Ends or Aims are to be attended to. The Bones are reckoned to be Two hundred eighty four: The diſtinct Scopes or Intentions in each of theſe, are above Forty; in all about an Hundred thouſand. And thus is it in ſome proportion with all the other Parts, the Skin, Ligaments, Veſſels, Glandules, Humours; but more eſpecially with the ſeveral Members of the Body, which do in regard of the great Variety and Multitude of thoſe ſeveral Intentions required to them, very much exceed the homogeneous Parts. And the failing of any one in theſe, would cauſe

Biſh. *Wilkin's* Nat. Rel. p. 81.

cauſe an irregularity in the Body, and in many of them ſuch as would be very notorious.

But becauſe I have juſt mentioned the pulſations of the Heart, I ſhall cloſe up this Speculation, by obſerving a little the amazing Works of Nature there. As the Sun is to this lower World, ſo is the Heart to every ſenſitive Creature a Fountain of Life; by the Vertue and Motion whereof the Blood is moved, perfected, invigorated, preſerved from Corruption, and performs its Office by nouriſhing, cheriſhing and invigogorating the whole Body. After the opening of the Heart, to let the Blood in on the Right-ſide, there follows a ſtrong Conſtriction, or Shutting up of the Heart to throw it out on the Left: And that vibration or beating which we feel then, is uſually called the Pulſe; whereby the Blood is caſt and forced into all Parts, for Nutrition every where, and to cauſe its return round about to the Heart again, when all Parts have been fed with ſome Portions

Cor principium vitæ & Sol microcoſmi (ut proportionabiliter Sol cor Mundi appellari meretur) cujus virtute & pulſu Sanguis movetur, perficitur, vegetatur, & à corruptione & grumefactione vindicatur, ſuumq; Officium nutriendo, fovendo, vegetando toti corpori præſtat Lar ille familiaris, fundamentum vitæ, auctor omnium. *Harv.* de Motu Cordis, Exerc. 1. Cap. 8.

tions of it. Now let any reaſonable Man view diſtinctly the contexture and frame of an Animal's Heart; and then let him lay his Hand upon his own, and ask his Conſcience ſeriouſly whether any thing but the higheſt Reaſon and Wiſdom could contrive that little, but moſt neceſſary Member, for its reſpective Uſes. For the clearing of this, let us conſider a little the artificial Works of Nature, both at the firſt formation and motions and of the Heart, and in its ſubſequent Operations.

1. And Firſt, As to the primordial Rudiments of this great Prop of Life. Suppoſe the Original Principle of Life to be incloſed within a round muſcular Subſtance, (like a little Bladder) which in time becomes a full, perfect Heart. Suppoſe (what a moſt Learned Anatomiſt tells us) this ſmall muſcular Subſtance (like a drop of Blood, or a Red Point) to palpitate, ſtir and beat, and by that Motion to form directly thoſe Side Veſſels above upon the Baſis of the Heart, which they call the Auricles, or Ears, and which are the next Parts that move. Suppoſe all this as plain Matter of Fact, we muſt conclude hence,

Harv. de Motu Cordis, Exer. 1. cap. 4. & cap. 17.

hence, That this Motion thus exerted, communicated, and carried on, is performed by thoſe contrivances of Nature, which are the neceſſary Inſtruments of Motion; and conſequently that thoſe Inſtruments are already in being. And what, think you, are thoſe Contrivances? Why, they go under the name of Fibres; and are in every Heart that is fully formed, like the fineſt Threads; and therefore may be well ſuppoſed to be at the firſt formation hardly ſo big as the fineſt Hairs. On theſe ſmall, exquiſite Inſtruments of Motion, the Lives of Men, and other Animals originally and conſtantly depend: And as they either ſtretch or ſhrink, ſo does the whole Heart open or ſhut; and ſo does that Vehicle of Life, the Blood, run. Without theſe Fibres, or Heart-ſtrings, 'twere impoſſible for the *Punctum Sanguineum*, or that firſt Rudiment of an Animal, like to a drop of Blood, to vibrate, or move, or exert its Faculty; much leſs to faſhion an Auricle, which is a Fibrous Part alſo, that opens and ſhuts, to let in, and force out the Blood, as the Heart it ſelf does, which immediately receives the Blood from it. And now

to

to argue hence a little, What do theſe artificial beginnings of Nature ſhew, but the wonderful Wiſdom, Skill and Power of a Divine Mind, and conſequently the Exiſtence of a God, that does order all the leaſt Tendencies to Life after ſuch an exact, exquiſite, and ſtupendious manner? For though in all this, Nature be the immediate Agent; yet that is of it ſelf a blind, unthinking, inartificial Thing. Though it be an active, vivifick, formative Principle (whatever the Subſtance of it be, whether material, or not) yet it is without all Conſciouſneſs, all Sagacity, all Forecaſt and Knowledge; and therefore cannot be ſuppoſed to contrive, or project, or to act by any Wiſdom of its own. And yet ſo wiſe are thoſe Contrivances, which are the Origen of every Animal's Life; ſo admirably Deſigned, ſo fitly, and appoſitely Formed in order to their Ends; that the whole Fabrication ſhews it to come from the Counſel, Will and Direction of a moſt intelligent Being, in whoſe Hand Nature is, and under whom it Operates. It requires no little Art to diſſect an Heart after a proper manner; to expoſe theſe Rudiments of Life to your

view; to ſhew you their Dependencies upon Tendons, their Figures, Poſitions, and Intertextures; and after all this Curioſity to delineate them upon Paper, and to give you with a Pen a little Reſemblance and Idea of them; this is enough to exerciſe and ſhew the Skill of the wiſeſt Artiſt upon Earth: And then, How great muſt the Wiſdom and Skill of that intelligent Agent be, who ſo admirably contrived the Original Formation and Structure of them?

2. As to ſubſequent Operations of Nature for the perfecting of the Heart, with all its Parts and meer Appendages, we are told that by the firſt Pulſations of the ſpringing Heart, the Parts of an Animal being now laid out and formed gradually, that prime Veſſel of Life increaſeth, and comes to diſcharge its Office to the full, being now well furniſhed with all Neceſſaries for it; ſo that as one Ear receives the Blood out of a great Vein, and then by its Conſtriction ſends it out into the Right-Boſom of the Heart; ſo that Heart by its own Conſtriction forceth it thence into the Lungs; whence it is agitated round into

into the Left, and ſo tranſmitted into the other Boſom, thence to be caſt by a new conſtriction into an Artery they call the Aorta, which like a great Pipe, laid into a Fountain, conveys it into many others; by which means every Particle over the whole Body is fed, irrigated and refreſhed. All which wonderful Works of Nature are perfomed immediately by the Fibres, thoſe Inſtruments of Motion I ſpake of before; which, the Heart being now grown corpulent, act with violence, and are ſtrong and viſible; ſome lying in direct Lines from the tip of the Heart to the Crown; others croſs-wiſe in the form of a Circle; others in Oblique, or winding Lines: All meeting within the tip, as in a knot or center, and faſtned above to round Tendons, like Strings tied to an Hoop: So that the Heart being full of Blood, as the tip makes its efforts upwards; ſo all the Fibres conſpire from every Part by a joynt Compreſſure to throw the Blood out, and then dilate themſelves again for the Reception of a new Supplement; and by this alternate Motion of theſe Fibres, every Minute is the Life of Man preſerved.

I cannot well omit one very material Obſervation more, concerning theſe artificial Contrivances which argue the Exiſtence of a moſt wiſe Being, the Author and Directer of Nature; and it is this, That in all the innumerable Canals of Blood, which tranſmit it to and from the Heart, there are (as indeed in the ſeveral Conveyances of the Chyle) muſcular Membranes, or Valves, provided (I cannot compare them better than to Sluce-doors) which open always before the Current, to let it paſs forward; but upon occaſion ſhut, to hinder it from returning the ſame way. And this is eſpecially obſervable in thoſe Veſſels which are in and about the Heart, where the Conſtrictions and Pulſations being ſo violent, would cauſe the vital Stream to flow back, did not the ſhutting of theſe Valves prevent it, before every Pulſation: Hence it is that the Blood is forced onwards, and is circulating every Moment; theſe Sluce-doors ſtopping all Reflux, and a Flood behind them ſtill preſſing on, till the Heart by its Conſtrictions evacuates it ſelf, and drives the Current forward ſtill, ſomewhat like an Engine in Water works, which (together with

with the other remarkable effects of Nature) ſhews, that every the leaſt Part within us is moſt wiſely fitted for its proper Uſe, and that the whole Structure is ſo congruouſly ordered, that nothing is vain, impertinent, or ſuperfluous; nothing that can be ſpared without diſturbance, damage, and danger to the Fabrick; and conſequently that there is nothing, but what is an Evidence of Counſel, Foreſight and aſtoniſhing Skill in a ſuperior Agent, framing and directing Nature after a moſt excellent manner; that is, a Deity.

I have taken the Liberty to venture upon theſe Anatomical Speculations (though ſome may think them a little too much out of my way) partly to raiſe in Peoples Minds the greater Senſe of God, by the ſtupendious Operations of his Hands, which they carry about with them, and which they find at home in their own Bodies; partly to excite them to all Acts of Praiſe and Thankfulneſs for ſuch Miracles of God's Providence; and partly to move them to all Sobriety and Regularity of Life. Intemperance and Debaucheries are quite diſtant from the Ends of our For-

mation, and utterly inconſiſtent with the Reaſons of it, nay deſtructive of them. And therefore People ſhould be very careful not to abuſe ſo excellent a piece of Workmanſhip, on which ſuch Elegance of Art and Care has been beſtowed; eſpecially conſidering how weak the *Stamina Vitæ*, all the Threads are on which our Lives depend; how frail, as well as curious, the whole Web of Nature is; and how ſoon we may be forced away to the Divine Tribunal, ſhould but a few Fibres break.

But to evade the force of this whole Argument for the Exiſtence of a God, lewd Scepticks are ready to tell us, from that old *Epicurean* and Atheiſt, *Lucretius*, That though many good Uſes of things have been found out, and the things are fitly apply'd to thoſe uſes, yet theſe uſes were never deſign'd, but fell out caſually; and conſequently are no proof of an underſtanding, intending Cauſe, or a Deity. And to this purpoſe a learned Writer gives an Account of theſe Men's Principles or Shifts, *viz.* That nothing in Man's Body was made out of deſign for any uſe; but that all the ſeveral parts thereof happening to be ſo made as they

Dr *Cudworth*, Intel Syſt. p. 670, 671.

they are, their uſes were conſequent thereupon. The former Teeth (ſay they) were made by material and mechanical Neceſſity thin and ſharp, by means whereof they became fit for cutting; and the Jaw-Teeth thick and broad, whereby they became uſeful for the grinding of Food: But neither of them were intended to be ſuch for the ſake of their uſes, but hapned by Chance only. And the like they affirm concerning all the other Parts of the Body, which ſeem to be made for Ends.

To which that learned Perſon replies, That though a thing that happens accidentally to be ſo or ſo made, may afterwards, notwithſtanding, prove often ſerviceable for ſome uſe or other, yet when any thing conſiſteth of many Parts that are all artificially proportionated together, and with much Curioſity accommodated one to another; any one of which Parts having been wanting, or otherwiſe in the leaſt placed or diſpoſed of, would have rendred the whole altogether inept for ſuch a uſe; then may we well conclude it not to have been made by Chance, but by Counſel and Deſign, and inten-

tionally for ſuch uſes: As for Example; the Eye, whoſe Structure and Fabrick conſiſting of many Parts, (Humours and Membranes) is ſo artificially compos'd, that no reaſonable Perſon who conſiders the whole Anatomy thereof, and the Curioſity of its Structure, can think otherwiſe of it, but that it was made out of Deſign, for the Uſe of Seeing; and did not happen accidentally to be ſo made, and then the uſe of Seeing follow. And for a Man to think, that not only Eyes happened to be ſo made, and the uſe of Seeing unintended followed, but alſo that in all the ſame Animals, Ears happened to be made ſo too, and the uſe of Hearing followed them; and a Mouth and Tongue happened to be made ſo likewiſe, and the uſe of Eating, and (in Men) of Speaking, was alſo accidentally conſequent thereupon; and that Feet were in the ſame Animals made by Chance too, and the uſe of walking followed; and Hands made in them by Chance alſo, upon which ſo many neceſſary Uſes depend: Beſides innumerable other Parts of the Body, both Similar and Organical; none of which could have been wanting, without

out rendring the whole inept or uſeleſs; I ſay, to think all theſe things ſhould happen by Chance to be thus made in every one and the ſame Animal, and not deſign'd by Mind or Counſel, that they might joyntly concur, and contribute to the good of the whole; this argues the greateſt inſenſibility of Mind imaginable. But this abſurd and ridiculous Conceit hath been long ſince ſo induſtriouſly confuted by that larned *Pagan* Philoſopher and Phyſician, *Galen*, in his Book of *the Uſe of Parts*, that it would be altogether ſuperfluous to inſiſt any more upon it.

I ſhall only add, for the Confirmation of all this, that in the ſeveral Species of Animals (both Men and Beaſts) many Parts are totally wanting in ſome Individuals, where they would have been neither neceſſary nor uſeful, which are not wanting in others where they are ſo; which ſhews that thoſe Parts were intended for uſes, and for their proper uſes only they were therefore formed, not by Chance, but by the greateſt Counſel and Wiſdom; that is, by the wiſe Contrivance of a Divine Mind. Nay, in ſome whole Species

Species there is a manifeſt difference, where there is good reaſon for that difference; a plain Argument, that it was Divine Reaſon which ordered all things ſo very exactly for the ſake of Ends, and with an intention to have thoſe Ends and purpoſes anſwer'd. As for inſtance; many Senſitive Creatures, (nay, a very ſtrict Enquirer into Nature tells us, the greater number of Animals) have no Lungs at all, as various ſorts of Fiſhes. The reaſon is, becauſe Lungs would be of no uſe to them; for their manner of Reſpiration is performed by the opening and ſhutting of their Gills. Again; ſome ſorts of Animals (as ſeveral kinds of Worms) have no Heart neither: The reaſon is, becauſe a Heart alſo would be of no uſe to thoſe Creatures; for, as they gather, ſo they diſpoſe of their Nouriſhment by Contracting and Relaxing their little Bodies; and conſequently there is in them no Circulation of the Blood, nor indeed any need of it; and ſo they have no need of a Heart to throw it about into their extreme Parts. Again; though many ſenſitive Creatures, (as Fiſh and others) which have no Lungs, have an Heart notwithſtand-

Harvey de motu Cord. c.6.

ſtanding, yet the ſame learned Author obſerves, that in all ſuch Creatures the Heart hath but one Ventricle or Boſom; whereas in Men, and in ſome other Animals, it hath two: The reaſon is, becauſe where there are two, the Right Ventricle ſerves to tranſmit the Blood into the Lungs, (as they ſend it about again to the Left Ventricle) But where Lungs are wanting, there a Right Ventricle would lie idle and unſerviceable to any good End or Purpoſe; and therefore Nature forms it not in thoſe Animals, one Cavity being enough for the Reception and Diſtribution of the Blood. Again; as the Heart of Man is connected to the Lungs, ſo does it lie cover'd over in a ſoft Membrane, like a Caſe or Purſe; 'tis call'd the *Pericardium*, wherein is a Watery Subſtance, (as 'tis generally thought) to moiſten and temper the Heart, that it may not be parch'd or render'd unfit for its Office, by inordinate Heats. But 'tis obſerv'd, that the Heart of a Brute is without ſuch a Caſe; and the reaſon perhaps is twofold, partly becauſe the Nouriſhment of a common Animal is not ſo ſtrong, nor the Blood ſo inflaming

Diſp. de Deo, p. 458

as

as to need Refrigeration there, partly becauſe the Heart of ſuch a Creature lying not in an exact Poſture, as in Man, but lengthwiſe, (according to the Figure of the Body) and preſſing ſomewhat upon the Diaphragm; were a *Pericardium* added, it might hinder the Diaphragm from moving freely, eſpecially in its Conſtrictions. To all which I ſhall ſubjoin but two Obſervations more, and the one is this; that in Animals which chew the Cud, there is wanting an upper Range of Teeth. The reaſon is, becauſe it wou'd be uſeleſs; for thoſe Animals fetching up again (by the Periſtaltick reciprocal Motion of the Stomach) their unconcocted, unmacerated Food, do, by a continued and gentle Rumination, as well prepare their Nouriſhment for Digeſtion, as other Creatures do theirs by a double Row of Grinders. The other I borrow of a Pious and Critical Naturaliſt, who ſpeaking of the Artificial and Wonderful Conformation of the Wind-pipe, obſerves, that leſt the aſperity or hardneſs of its Cartilages ſhould hurt the *Oeſophagus* or Gullet, which is tender, and of a skinny Subſtance, or hinder the ſwallowing down of

Mr. *Ray's* Wiſdom, &c. p. 46.

of Meat, therefore its annulary Griſtles are not made every where round and entire Circles; but where the Gullet touches the Wind-pipe, there to fill up the Circles, is only a ſoft Membrane, which may eaſily give way to the dilatation of the Gullet. And to demonſtrate that this was deſignedly done for this End and Uſe, ſo ſoon as the Wind-pipe enters the Lungs, its Cartilages are no longer deficient, but perfect Circles or Rings, becauſe there is no neceſſity for them to be otherwiſe there (at a diſtance from the Meat) but more convenient they ſhould be (in their Divarications) entire.

The Scope and Meaning of theſe things is, in ſhort, to ſhew, that though that energetick and forming Power or Principle, which we call Nature, doth act without any Counſel, Deſign, Advice, or Deliberation of its own, yet in its Operations it worketh ſo Methodically and Artificially, in order to good Ends and Purpoſes, that in its ordinary Proceedings, nothing can be found which is uſeleſs and ſuperfluous; nothing which is not neceſſary, proper, or convenient; nothing but what

what there is ſome reaſon for; nothing but what great Wiſdom would direct; and by conſequence, that there is a moſt Wiſe, Directing Being over it, who does preſerve, aſſiſt, and govern it in its orderly, but blind Operations: For what Man in his Senſes can conceive, that an intelligent and directing Cauſe hath no Hand at all in Works wherein we ſee ſuch excellent Ends ſo exactly anſwered, and ſuch ſuitable Means ſo cleverly uſed, and every thing ſo wiſely and admirably well done? How is it poſſible for any conſidering Man to imagine, That the Inſtruments of Breathing ſhould be ſo curiouſly formed by meer Accident? That the caſual impulſe of the Air ſhould break upon the Noſtrils, and bore the Paſſages and Meanders of Senſation? That Chance, and nothing but fooliſh Chance, ſhould prepare a Mouth, and furniſh a Mouth with all things neceſſary and apt? That nothing but unadviſed Fortune, or unadviſed Nature, (which alone is as uncertain of its Hits, as Fortune is) ſhould ſo orderly and exquiſitely provide a Stomach for the Reception of Food; Materials to concoct it; a La-

Labyrinth of Conveyances, to carry it off; a politick Duct of many Veſſels to refine it; a Machine of Curioſities, to diſtribute and diſperſe it into all Parts? But —— here I ſtop: For I have ſpoken of theſe things already; and though the Chyle takes a Round, and the Blood a Circulation, yet this Diſcourſe muſt admit of none; and therefore thus much ſhall ſuffice to be ſpoken concerning the great uſefulneſs of all things, and eſpecially of thoſe things which tend to the preſervation of Man and Beaſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

THE great Utilities of the things in Nature having been thus largely and particularlarly conſidered, together with their apt and excellent Frame, in order to their uſes, one would now think, that no more ſhould be neceſſary to ſhew the Exiſtence of a moſt Wiſe and Good God. However, it will not, I hope, be unprofitable for the Confirmation of your Faith in that abſolutely perfect Being, if I proceed (though but in a ſummary way) to the utmoſt extent of this Subject; at leaſt, as far as to thoſe Bounds which were propos'd at my firſt Entrance upon it. The more we look into the Works of God, the more apt we ſhall be to admire, adore, and love him; whence it was that the devout Pſalmiſt made it his buſineſs to think of all his Works; to meditate and muſe upon them; to declare and ſet them forth; to talk (familiarly) of them; and to invite all People to behold and conſider them: And he lookt upon it as a great Cauſe of the Wickedneſs of thoſe

thoſe ungodly and deceitful Men he ſpake of, *Pſalm* 28. *That they regard not in their minds the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands.* Let us therefore go on to the next thing which falls under our Meditations, and that is, touching thoſe Reſemblances of Knowledge and Wiſdom which appear in the Operations even of irrational Creatures, that they may anſwer their uſes, and bring their ends about. For if it be conſidered, that ſuch Beings are utterly void of all Underſtanding which is properly called Rational, and yet act ſo Methodically and Artificially, as if they had Reaſon, Judgment, and Diſcretion of their own, it muſt follow, that they are guided and governed by a Superiour Being, which is intellectual, and whoſe Reaſon is the Law they act by. Here then we are to obſerve theſe two following things, which ſhew the Reſemblances of Knowledge and Wiſdom in Creatures Irrational. 1. Their conſtant Regularity as to the manner of their Operations. And, 2. Their ſeeming Sagacity as to the ends of them.

1. *Firſt*, Their conſtant Regularity, as to the manner of their Operations. There are no Creatures (Devils and Men excepted) but what act uniformly and ſteadily by a certain Rule, according to their Natures, whether they be Inanimate or Vegetative, or Beings indued with Senſe, we ſee they obſerve their Laws; as well thoſe general Laws which are for the Order and Preſervation of the whole Univerſe, as thoſe ſpecial Laws which are peculiar and proper to their ſeveral Kinds. To this purpoſe I have already taken notice of the conſtant regular Motion of the Celeſtial Bodies, and therefore ſhall not need to have any farther Recourſe to them; though it be an aſtoniſhing thing to conſider, that ſuch vaſt multitudes of immenſe Bodies, all void both of Intellectual and Senſitive Faculties, and ſeveral of them moving in a manner different from the reſt, ſhould for ſo long a Tract of Time, obſerve their Lines ſo uniformly and exactly, that for theſe Six Thouſand Years there hath not been the leaſt variation of their Courſes. Of this no other rational Account can be given, but

but that there is a ſuperintending Being above, under whoſe commanding Power they always have been, and to whoſe Will they yield entire and abſolute Obedience. Since they know not their Law themſelves, it muſt follow, that there is a God who knows it for them, and keeps them to it.

Of thoſe Inanimate, or Live-leſs things which are in the Earth, I ſhall inſtance only in the regular inclination, or tendency of the Loadſtone; the greateſt Wonder which the Earth affords. And (not to enumerate all thoſe ſtrange Faculties and Powers, which ſome curious Naturaliſts have diſcovered in it, eſpecially in theſe laſt Ages) that which is moſt pertinent to my preſent purpoſe is, that it conſtantly affects the ſame Poſition towards the Poles of the Earth, which was Natural to it before it was taken out of the Bowels of its Mother Rock: So that where ever it be carried it will (if it hath its liberty to move) ſtill direct its Points towards the *North* and *South*, as it lay Originally, and as the Earth it ſelf lyes. If you hang it in the Air by a String, or ſet it in ſome floating incloſure on the ſurface of Water, it will

never be at reſt, but ſtir and quaver on till its Points anſwer to the *North* and *South*; as if it were Conſcious of a Right which Nature gave it, to one particular, determinate Situation. Nor is this all; for (as if it communicated its ſeeming Conſciouſneſs) every Needle of a Sea-Compaſs, or of a moveable Sun-Dial, that is touched by the Load-ſtone, will affect the ſame Direction, and reſtleſly incline to the ſame Points. A wonderful Secret in Nature, and unaccountable hitherto by meer Principles of Philoſophy; and yet that which has been vaſtly Beneficial to the Trading and Travelling part of Mankind, ſince the Diſcovery of it in Fact. And what can all the Scepticks in the World do here with their ſenſeleſs Atoms? When all is done, This ſtrange Myſtery in Nature muſt be aſcribed to the Power and Pleaſure of a Divine Agent that hath given every thing a Law; that is, hath impreſt upon all Matter a fatal Neceſſity of moving according to that energetick Principle, wherewith he himſelf endued it.

The

The conſtant regularity of all things upon the ſurface of the Earth, is obvious to every Man's eye. We ſee that Plants germinate, grow, and ſeminate exactly according to their ſeveral Kinds; and though the manner of their Operations, and the quality of their Productions be as different, as their Species; yet in each Species every particular individual worketh ſuch as the reſt of the ſame ſort do; as if every diſtinct Species had ſet it ſelf a diſtinct Rule; and as if every individual had conſented to one and the ſame common Polity. In like manner every Species of Animals acteth ſtill after the ſame rate; though their particular, and proper Rules be different; yet one and the ſame Rule belongs to every Animal of the ſame Species, which they conſtantly obſerve without any difference, difformity, or variation. For as each ſuſtains it ſelf after the ſame manner, and with the ſame ſort of Food, which belongs properly to the whole, and is peculiar to the whole Species and Set; ſo each propagates its Kind the ſame way; preparing for Propagation by the ſame Methods; breeding their Young at the ſame Seaſons;

nouriſhing them with the ſame Matter; training them up, and providing for them by the ſame pretty Artifices which are uſed by all others of the ſame Rank and Order. Go, for inſtance, but to the Fowls of the Air, and you may obſerve how regularly and accurately each individual Bird operates, according to thoſe Laws, which are common to that particular Species whereunto it belongs. From the *Raven* to the *Sparrow* every peculiar Species hath its peculiar Rules for its increaſe; and every one particular Bird yields the moſt exact Obedience to thoſe Rules: Not the leaſt difference is to be found in the Bigneſs, or Colour, or Form of any one Egg; nor any difference in the Building wherein it is laid: But the ſame Proportions are in it all, the ſame Situation, the ſame Materials, the ſame Shape, the ſame Structure within, the ſame Defenſatives without, the ſame Curioſity of Art over and in it all; hardly a Stick, or an Hair difference; no diſcernible variation to be found, as to Plaiſtering, or Garniture, or Moſs, or whatever elſe the Integument be. As a great City, or Society of Men, is divided into ſeveral diſtinct Fraterni-

ties,

ties, and each Fraternity is Governed, as by general Laws for the Intereſt and Welfare of the whole Community, ſo by particular Orders for the Proſperity and Good of the diſtinct Company, in conformity whereunto every ſingle Member acteth; ſo is this lower World divided into many diſtinct Ranges of Creatures; and each Range in Nature hath its Laws given it; ſome which relate to the general Good of the whole Univerſe; and others that relate to the particular Good of every diſtinct Claſſis: And theſe Laws are exactly obeyed by every individual Creature; ſo that were Man out of the way, there would be no Being in this viſible World, but what would be Regular, Orderly, and Conformable to its Rules; though Man be the only Creature that underſtands his Rules.

And can all this Regularity be with any pretence of Reaſon aſcribed to an unintending Cauſe, or to blind Chance, that never did any one thing by Rule ſince the World ſtood; and therefore can never be thought to act Uniformly in every Creature conſtantly, and in all Inſtances? No; theſe Operations ſo exactly Congruous and Regular, are a

plain Argument of the Exiſtence of a directing Deity, and a real Explication of that Divine Benediction and Command, which *Moſes* ſays was given at the Creation: *That the earth ſhould bring forth graſs, the herb yielding ſeed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind; that every winged fowl ſhould multiply after its kind; and that every living creature ſhould be brought forth after his kind; cattel and creeping things, and beaſts of the earth, all after their kind; and it was ſo.* Thoſe Productions were regular then, and ſo they are ſtill, and will continue ſo to the end of the World; being no other but ſo many conſtant, and viſible Executions of an Original Law.

2. Beſides this great Regularity of things in the manner of their Operations, we muſt conſider next the ſeeming Sagacity of them, as to the ends of their Operations; which is another Expreſſion of the reſemblances of Knowledge and Wiſdom in Creatures that are Irrational. All Creatures work, as if they underſtood the Reaſon of their methodical Proceedings; nay, as if they propoſed Ends to themſelves, and

and intended by ſuch and ſuch Means to bring all their Projects and Purpoſes to paſs; chiefly to preſerve their own Being, and then to continue their Kind, and to provide a Poſterity to ſucceed them, when either natural Death, or Caſualties ſhall take them off, that no part of the Creation may be loſt. It is obſervable of all Vegetables in general, that from the opening of the Spring they begin and carry on their methodical Works, as if they knew beforehand all the buſineſs they are to do the next Summer; and as if they intended to anſwer the Ends now mentioned: Firſt by taking care for their own Growth; and then for Semination. And it is obſervable in particular of divers Pulſes, and other Plants, whoſe Natures are ſo weak and feeble, that they cannot ſtand upright of themſelves, that, as if they were ſenſible of their Infirmity, they ſhoot forth into various Fibres, Strings, and twining Branches, which bear no Fruit, but are deſigned to take hold and clutch on ſome Poll, or Wall, or on ſome neighbouring Shrub, for the ſupport of the Vegetable, and for its better Suſtenance and Semination: In all which Nature works with

with ſo much ſeeming Caution, Prudence and Forecaſt, that if it had Reaſon of its own, it could not operate with greater Art. And then for ſenſitive Creatures, we ſee with Admiration what reſemblances of Wiſdom and Providence there are in their Actions. *Go to the ant, thou ſluggard,* (ſaith *Solomon*) *conſider her ways, and be wiſe: Which having no guide, overſeer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt*, Prov. 6. 6, 7, 8. In the Common Edition of the *Septuagint*, it is there added, *Go to the bee, thou ſluggard, and learn what an opificer that is, and how ſtupendious its works are.* Thoſe curious Obſervers who have narrowly look'd into the Nature and Polity of that Animal, have given ſuch accounts of it, that one would think it to be next to Man himſelf, the moſt admirable Creature in the World; though our chief Good be reſerved for us in another World; and therefore are to be excuſed, if they ſpeak of it in that manner, as if it were a Rational Agent With what Sagacity doth it perceive, when its Labours are to begin, and where its Employment is to lie chiefly? And how artificially

tificially doth it order all its oeconomical Affairs? Its firſt Care is for a Repoſitory to lay up its Stores, and to breed its Young in. And with what Curioſity doth it ſearch after the viſcous Matter? How skilfully doth it gather and prepare the Wax? And then with what mathematical Exactneſs doth it diſpoſe it in various Apartments of Combs and Cells, all ſo accurately contrived for Strength, Figure, Situation, and perfect Uniformity, that they are above the Imitation of all humane Art? The next care is for a treaſure of Nouriſhment; and with what a quick Senſe doth it diſcover a Mildew, though at a great diſtance from its Habitation? With what Niceneſs of Application doth it paſs from Flower to Flower to extract its Aliment? And having at laſt by its chymical Methods furniſh'd it ſelf with quantities ſufficient; With what a diſcriminating Faculty doth it order it at home, diſcharging its Legs of the flegmatick or groſſer Part, which it lays by in ſpare places for its preſent Food; and caſting up the moſt ſpirituous drops out of its Stomach into Cells, and there covering them up with a viſcous Membrane, for a neceſſary reſerve againſt the

the ſcarcities and ſeverities of Winter? Beſides theſe reſemblances of Providence for the ſupport of its Nature, and for the increaſe of its Kind; Some have made ſuch Obſervations of its ſeeming Wiſdom in reference to the whole Community, as afford even us Men divers moral and uſeful Directions. For their mutual Intereſt all are induſtriouſly at their reſpective Employment; as if they had a tranſcript of that Law, which the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of *Pſal.* 104. 23, when *The ſun ariſeth, man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour until the evening.* As there ſhould be in all Societies, ſo is there in this, a perfect Unity among themſelves. If Foreigners threaten an Invaſion, they eaſily diſtinguiſh them, though of the ſame Colour, Shape, and Bigneſs with themſelves, and the next moment they prepare for Battle. If any of their Members ſuffer, all ſympathize, and are engaged with undaunted Reſolution, with a joynt Force, and with the utmoſt hazard of their Lives; which gave *David* occaſion to ſay of his Enemies, *They came about me like Bees.* Within their own Body there is all Order, Harmony, and Peace (the wiſeſt things for the

See *Butler* and *Allen* of Bees.

the good of all Communities) and to preſerve thoſe things the more effectually, their Government is Monarchical; under which they provide for the Common good of all, and ſerve their Sovereign with their Labours, with entire Obedience, with Fidelity, with Cheerfulneſs; nay, with devoted Affection: So that if their Queen dieth without a Succeſſor ready, either they too die there upon the ſpot, or elſe quit all their Treaſures, to force themſelves through any Dangers and Wounds into another well conſtituted Community. From all which very ſtrange, but (as far as ever yet I could perceive) very true Obſervations, a Queſtion may ariſe, Whether among all thoſe Forms of Government, which are, or have been among Mankind, there ever was any one ſort of Polity more wiſely Framed and better Served, than that is among theſe little neglected Animals?

And from theſe I might proceed at a large rate, to obſerve thoſe reſemblances of Underſtanding and Prudence, which appear in other ſenſitive Creatures. With what ſeeming Forecaſt do they generally provide Conveniencies for

for the breeding of their Young? How artificial are their Works in order to it? What Patience do they ſeem to expreſs in their Labours and Griefs? What Fondneſs do they ſhew to their new Off-ſpring? What Cares do ſome take for Nouriſhment ſuitable to their Natures; and with what Pleaſure do others yield it? How Sollicitous are they for their Safety? What pretty Methods do they uſe in training them up? And how do they teach them by degrees to ſhift for themſelves in the World? If you obſerve every rank and ſpecies of Animals, you will find in all thoſe poor Things a ſimilitude of Sagacity; ſome Faint, and Imperfect, and Umbratile ſhews of Reaſon; and ſurprizing imitations of Prudence and Policy in all their Operations. And yet all this is nothing, but what we call Natural Inſtinct; that is, there is a fatal Neceſſity impreſt upon them; or an inward, operative Principle ſeminated and fix'd in their Natures, which is a ſubordinate Inſtrument of the Deity, and which does, like a Byaſs, powerfully incline and move them to act after ſuch a manner, when they themſelves underſtand not the Reaſons of their Action.

Actions. In Three reſpects the Operations of all ſenſitive Creatures are different from the Actions done by Beings Rational.

First, They do not intentionally deſign the accompliſhment of ſuch a certain End, which is the ſcope of their Operations. Nor, Secondly, Do they underſtand the Reaſons of thoſe means, which are in order to that End. Nor, Thirdly, Do they conſult or deliberate about the Choice of thoſe means. And therefore it will unavoidably follow, that their Operations being always Uniform and Artificial, notwithſtanding their own natural Defects, and want of Reaſon, there is a Divine Being over them of perfect Knowledge and Wiſdom, that intends, and underſtands, and chuſeth for them, and directs them by a perpetual, ſecret, and irreſiſtible Law. To conſider this matter diſtinctly:

1. First, They do not intentionally deſign the accompliſhment of ſuch a certain End, which is the ſcope of their Operations. For the End, though it be the firſt thing purpoſed, is the laſt thing done. At the time of acting it is at ſuch a diſtance, as affords only a Proſpect

Proſpect of it: Nor can Man himſelf be ſaid to deſign an End, unleſs he does both apprehend and foreſee it, unleſs he be affected and wrought upon by Motives from it; nay, unleſs he thinks it poſſible, and goes about the thing with deſires, and hopes to bring it to paſs. Now theſe are Impreſſions, of which no irrational Creature is capable; becauſe they include, not ſo much ocular Perception, as mutual Knowledge and Diſcourſe, touching the Neceſſity, Goodneſs, Feaſableneſs, and Fitneſs of the Matter propoſed and foreſeen; which require much Reaſoning, and a due Logical Inferring of one thing out of another; and that can never be done by any Animal that is meerly ſenſitive: To inſtance only in the induſtrious Bee; though of all ſuch Animals it ſeems to be indued with the greateſt Sagacity, yet we cannot conceive, that in Spring time it foreſees the return of Winter; that it keeps an Eye ſtill upon hard Weather afar off; that it hath a proſpect of Froſt and Snow, of naked Woods and Fields; and that upon theſe Conſiderations and Motives it makes a diligent uſe of the preſent Seaſon, going forth early, and coming home

home late, and eating (if I may ſo ſpeak) the Bread of Carefulneſs. We cannot imagine that the poor Creature concludes this to be the proper and beſt way for it to ſubſiſt, and that it uſeth this Method in hopes of living on to another Year. Nor can we think that Gathering time being quite over, when it deſtroys the (then uſeleſs) Drones, it makes that Maſſacre out of a deſign of Frugality, retrenching thereby the Expences of the Houſe-hold, and curtailing the Family, leſt thoſe voracious Creatures ſhould cauſe a Famine among them. Theſe things in Fact it doth, and they manifeſtly tend to the preſervation of its Life; and throughout all, the Bee ſeems to be very Wiſe and Provident (though its Providence be mix'd with ſo much Cruelty and Ingratitude) and if it had Reaſon of its own, it could not take a more effectual and ready way for its Safety. But yet notwithſtanding all this ſhew of Policy and Forecaſt, it doth not ſo much as underſtand that its Life is concerned; nor does it think at all, why, or to what purpoſe it operates after that manner; much leſs doth it act upon a long train of Thoughts, but it doth thus of

courſe, and by the fatal energy of a natural Principle within it, no more aiming at Ends, than an Arrow aims at the Mark towards which it flyes. And the like may be ſaid of all other ſenſitive Creatures, how Sagacious ſoever they appear to be; they go ſtill on in a road, which meer natural Inſtinct directs them to, and ſometime Cuſtom maketh familiar; but know not the End of all their Travels under the Sun any more than the Ox, or the Sheep knoweth when it is going to the Slaughter.

2. As they deſign not any End for the ſcope of their Operations, ſo neither do they apprehend the reaſon of thoſe Means which are in order to an undiſcerned End. The reaſon of any Means lyeth in the Neceſſity, Fitneſs and Conduceableneſs thereof, for the obtaining of an End: For, therefore do all rational Creatures act thus and thus, becauſe ſuch ſorts of Actions are neceſſary and proper, to compaſs the Deſigns they drive at. Now as to this, all wiſer ſenſitive Creatures are utterly at a loſs: Though they do things which are neceſſary, and convenient, and proper, yet they know nothing of their tendency

tendency and fitneſs; that is, they are wholly ignorant upon what account ſuch and ſuch Operations are requiſite, or convenient. For this calls for Diſcretion and Judgment to carry a Deſign on; though the End be known and viſible, yet 'tis a Work of Reaſon to conſider what is to be done for it; how to find out good, fitting, and effectual Methods, and then how to apply and uſe thoſe Methods after a right manner. This requires good, intellectual Parts to diſcover the neceſſity and fitneſs of one thing in order to another, and to act according as the Reaſon and Nature of the thing is; and therefore it is impoſſible for any Brute Creatures to act after a diſcreet, judicious rate. To inſtance again in that little Animal I ſpoke of before: Though it works moſt artificially for the ſake of Ends, yet it works not with any Diſcretion or Judgment of its own. For as it hath no diſtinct apprehenſion, or foreſight of the Ends themſelves; ſo neither doth it underſtand the reaſon of thoſe Means it uſeth. It knows not what neceſſity there is for the gathering of Wax firſt; nor upon what account Wax is the fitteſt and moſt convenient thing to make a Lar-

der for the treaſuring up a Proviſion of Honey. It knows not the reaſon for which every Comb muſt be made up of a Partition-Wall of Wax in the middle, and a large Structure of little Cells on each ſide. It knows not why it muſt work and frame every thing with ſuch Geometrical accuracy; nor why the Cells muſt hang together by cloſe Junctures; nor upon what account each of them muſt conſiſt of juſt ſix Angles; nor for what reaſon the Angles on the one Side muſt not anſwer the oppoſite corners on the other Side exactly to a Point. It knows not that the meaning of all this delicate Art, is, for the greater Stability, Strength, and Security of the whole. All this done, it knows not upon what account two ſorts of Honey muſt be gather'd; a finer and more limpid Part, as the beſt and moſt congruous to be preſerved againſt Winter; and for its preſent Nouriſhment a groſſer Subſtance, which will not keep ſweet very long. It knows not why its Mouth and Tongue are the fitteſt Inſtruments to extract that; and its Legs more proper to tread out, and bear away this. And after the induſtrious Thing hath been trading abroad for

for its Prizes, though it returns home throughly Fraighted, and diſchargeth it ſelf of its Lading, yet it is as Ignorant then why the Mouth of the Cell, where the richeſt Part lieth, muſt be preſently Plaiſter'd over. It conſiders not, poor Creature! that its choice and far-fetch'd Pearls are of a fluid Subſtance, that otherwiſe would ſoon run out; and though it knows not the reaſon why, yet it lays them up as ſecurely as the verieſt Hunks and Miſer does his Money, till Neceſſity knocks at the Cell-door, or ſome Thieves and Robbers come to plunder it. Such Obſervations are to be made of all other Parts of the Animal World: Though their Methods be not equally Curious, but admit of great Variety and Difference; yet in their Kinds and Tendencies they are all proper for the Preſervation of themſelves, and for the Propagation and Welfare of their ſeveral Species. But neither do they intend, or deſign any Purpoſes by elicite Acts of Choice and Providence of their own; nor do they examine or comprehend the aptitude and congruity of their Methods in order to Purpoſes; and therefore they muſt be concluded to

act by the Reaſons of a Divine Mind, to which they are in Subordination. Indeed ſome ſort of Perception may be allowed them, ſuch as is agreeable to their irrational Natures; that is, a Perception in the Phanſie; whereby they are, in ſome meaſure, ſenſible of what they do, while they are yet a doing it. But that they look before them, and at a diſtance, with an Eye upon ſome End, the goodneſs whereof invites them to uſe Means; or that they look about them to compare the fitneſs of thoſe Means, for the compaſſing of that End; this we cannot allow them without the forfeiture of our own Reaſon, though their Actions carry an Umbrage of Reaſon with them. As the Bird perceives when ſhe makes her Neſt, ſhe is ſenſible then of her own Actions; for the matter of her Actions, or the Works ſhe does, makes an Impreſſion on her outward Senſe, and that conveys an Idea of it to the Phanſie in her Brain. But all this while the Bird doth not chooſe to act upon a premiſed Principle, that ſhe providentially deſigns this Neſt for her Young; nor does ſhe thence infer that therefore ſhe muſt build it in ſuch a place, with

with ſuch Materials, after ſuch a manner, in ſuch a form, and to ſuch a degree of warmth, as is moſt ſuitable to the temper of her Young; for this would be Reaſoning and Arguing, or Deducing of one thing out of another, which is a Thing or Art too high for any Brute Creature. And yet all theſe things are done, in every reſpect ſo ſuitably, and with ſuch artifice and exactneſs, that the moſt contriving Man in the World with all his Reaſon and Skill cannot poſſibly do them ſo well: Which ſhews that there is a Power and Reaſon ſuperiour even to humane Wiſdom, that hath invigorated the Natures of Animals with an energetick Principle, which we call Inſtinct, whereby they form their Works with the greateſt Contrivance, though they know not the meaning of them.

3. This is an Imperfection in their Nature, notwithſtanding all their curious Formations. And yet, Thirdly, There is another reſpect wherein their Operations differ from the Actions of Rational Creatures; namely, that as they know not Ends, nor the reaſon of any Means, ſo they do not conſult, or

dliberate about the uſe of Means. All Artiſts among Men conſider which is the fitteſt and beſt way to be taken; and in their Undertakings they do ſtill leave room for ſecond Thoughts. And hence it is, that humane Arts admit of great Improvements; becauſe ſecond Thoughts produce new Experiments; and new Experiments produce freſh Variety; and ſo by comparing one effect with another, a Man ſees where he alter'd the former Method for the better, and how neceſſary and uſeful that Alteration was. But in the Operations of Nature it is not thus; for Nature hath never but one way, and that way is not only ready at hand, but ſo very fit and proper too, that it is not capable of Amendments. Hence it is that ſenſitive Creatures are never to ſeek what to do, nor ever change their wonted courſe; but proceed in a conſtant, uniform Tenor, uſing the very ſame means for the preſervation of their own Beings, and for the propagation of their ſeveral Kinds, which were uſed by thoſe that were before them Six thouſand Years ago. They do not conſider whether things may not be done better now, than they were in thoſe days; nor do

they

they ſo much as look back upon the laſt preceding Generation, but go on ſtill in the ſame way by roat, without forecaſt, reflection, or advice; and yet we ſee their Works are ſo artificially done, that if they had had the longeſt Experience, and the greateſt Reaſon of their own, they could not after all their Studies and Practice have pitch'd upon more ſuccesful and exquiſite Methods.

Let us now from theſe Premiſes conſider with due freedom of Thoughts, whether this be not a manifeſt Proof of the Exiſtence of a Being, which is infinitely Operative and Omniſcient: For from what other Cauſe could all this Art in Nature come? Whence elſe could it receive its admirable Skill? What but a Deity could direct and govern it? What other Being could teach that rude and undiſcerning Thing to exerciſe its Faculties after ſuch a methodical and unreproveable manner? Or what elſe could guide it in making ſuch regular, uniform, and conſtant Strokes, as if it were all perfect Wiſdom, when it hath not in it ſelf the leaſt Grain of clear and true Knowledge? It is all meer natural Inſtinct; and (as an excellent Writer, now with God, ſpeaks) natural

Dr. *Scott.* Chriſt. Life, Part 2. p. 214.

natural Inſtinct is nothing but the Impreſſion of the Art and Reaſon of the Authour of Nature; which Impreſſion knoweth not what it doth, nor upon what Reaſons it proceeds, but only anſwers to the Reaſon of God, as the Signature doth to the Seal that impreſt it, and like an Eccho articulates and reſounds his Voice, without underſtanding what it meaneth. And as the ſenſeleſs Eccho when it reverberates Words that carry Senſe and Reaſon in them, ſuppoſeth the original Voice to proceed from ſome intelligent Mind; ſo theſe irrational Inſtincts of Nature, which expreſs ſo much Art and Reaſon in their Operations, do neceſſarily imply that there is ſome wiſe Mind or Providence to which they owe their Original.

If our modern Scepticks tell us, That theſe natural Inſtincts come *ex traduce*, and by deſcent from one Animal to another; let us conſider how they came there, in every Species of Animals, at the firſt (for an infinity of Cauſes is impoſſible) If they are ſo hardy as to tell us, That they came Originally by the caſual Motion of unthinking Matter; let us conſider again how it comes to paſs that theſe natural Inſtincts hold on,

on, and continue in every Species, and in every Individual throughout the World; ſince Chance, (blind, ſporting, and wild Chance) is far more likely to ſpoil a fine Work than to make it: Or, if after all they affirm, That the continuance of Inſtincts from Generation to Generation is perfectly caſual; that is, without the Pleaſure or Power of an underſtanding Being over all; let us conſider, laſtly, that Chance and Wiſdom are things as utterly diſtant from each other, as Extreams and Contraries are. Chance never did any thing Wiſely, nor by Rule, nor after a uniform Rate, nor in a conſtant, uninterrupted Tenor. And yet all Animals operate Wiſely, as if they perfectly underſtood the Reaſons and Neceſſities of their own Actions. But that they have no Wiſedom or Reaſon of their own, is evident because whatſoever they do, they neceſſarily do, and cannot poſſibly do otherwiſe; for they never vary in their Operations, never try any new Experiments, but always proceed in the ſame Road, and repeat the ſame things in the ſame Method; which is a plain ſign that they cannot do otherwiſe, and conſequently that they act not from their

Id. ibid. p. 218.

their own Choice or Reaſon, but Neceſſity: And therefore ſince they are made and impelled to act as they do, and yet do act Rationally and Wiſely, that which compels them muſt be a rational Mind, either acting upon them immediately, or by a fix'd and permanent Impreſſion of its Art and Reaſon upon their Nature and Motions.

The truth is, thoſe Images and Imitations of Wiſdom which are in Creatures purely ſenſitive, together with the regularity and conſtancy of their Operations, are as plain an evidence as need be given of the Exiſtence of a God; becauſe it is unconceiveable how the Animal Parts of the World ſhould ſo orderly conform to the Rules of Reaſon, as if they were endued with intelectual Faculties, without any directions and influence from a Divine Mind preſiding over all. It is no rarity to ſee ſome of thoſe Creatures (eſpecially ſuch as have the quickeſt Senſe) gratifie the curioſity of People, by an entertaining ſhew of ſuch artificial Geſtures and Actions, as if they underſtood the meaning of Commands, and knew how to obey: And can any one believe that they never had any Artiſt

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to diſcipline and teach them? Yet theſe Inſtances are comparatively very few; nor is this half ſo much as natural Inſtinct; and, at laſt, all their little Tricks vaniſh with their Breath: And is it imaginable, that every Animal under Heaven could conſtantly, and in all things act after ſuch a regular and wiſe Manner, without a commanding Power over them? Or, that any other Power could be able to command them all, but that which was the Original of their Natures?

Indeed the Learned Dr. *Cudworth* obſerves, that ſome odd Philoſophers have given it out, That ſenſeleſs Atoms, playing and toiling up and down, without any Care or Thought, and from Eternity trying all manner of Concluſions and Experiments, were at length (they know not how) taught, and by the neceſſity of things themſelves, as it were driven to a certain kind of Trade of Artificialneſs and Methodicalneſs; ſo that though their Motions were at firſt all Caſual and Fortuitous, yet in length of time they became Orderly and Artificial, and governed by a certain Law; they contracting, as it were, upon themſelves by long Practice and Expe- Intel. Syſt. p. 675.

Experience, a kind of Habit of moving regularly; or elſe by the meer neceſſity of things, at length forced ſo to move, as they ſhould have done, had Art and Wiſdom directed them.

But (as that great Man ſtrongly Argues) it is no more poſſible, That the fortuitous Motion of dead and ſenſeleſs Matter ſhould ever form it ſelf, be taught, or neceſſitated, to produce ſuch an orderly and regular Syſtem, as the Frame of this whole World is, together with the Bodies of Animals, and conſtantly to continue the ſame; than that a Man perfectly Illiterate, and neither able to write nor read, taking up a Pen into his Hand, and making all manner of Scrawls with Ink upon Paper, ſhould at length be taught and neceſſitated by the thing it ſelf, to write a whole Quire of Paper together with ſuch Characters, as being decyphered by a certain Key, would all prove Coherent, Philoſophick Senſe. Or, than that a Man Writing down the meer Letters of the Alphabet tranſpoſedly, any how, as it happens, without the leaſt Thought either of Words or Senſe, after his Scribling a long time together, what is altogether inſignificant, ſhould

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at length be taught and neceſſitated by the thing it ſelf, without the leaſt ſtudy or conſideration of his own, to write a large excellent Volume. Or to uſe another Inſtance; This is no more poſſible than that ten or a dozen Perſons, altogether unskilled in Muſick, having ſeveral Inſtruments given them, and ſtriking the Strings or Keys thereof, any how, as it happened, ſhould after ſome time of Diſcord and Jarring, at length be taught and neceſſitated to fall into moſt exquiſite Harmony, and continue the ſame uninterruptedly for ſeveral Hours together.

Wherefore if it be ridiculous for one that hath read over the Works of *Plato*, or *Ariſtotle*, or thoſe Six Books of *Lucretius Carus*, *De Naturâ rerum*; to contend that poſſibly the Letters of thoſe Books might be all put together by Chance, or ſcribled at Random, without the leaſt thought or ſtudy of the Writer, he alſo having no manner of philoſophick Skill in him: Or for one that hears ten or a dozen Perſons playing in Conſort upon Inſtruments of Muſick, and making raviſhing Harmony, to perſwade himſelf that none of thoſe Players had, for all that, the leaſt

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of muſical Art or Skill in them, but ſtruck the Strings as it happened: If all this be ridiculous to imagine, it muſt needs be much more ridiculous and abſurd, to ſuppoſe this artificial Syſtem of the whole World, to have reſulted from the fortuitous Motion of ſenſeleſs Atoms, without the direction of any Art or Wiſdom; there being much more of Senſe, Art, and Philoſophy therein, than in any philoſophick Volume or Poem ever written by Men; and more of Harmony and Proportion, than in any Compoſition of Muſick. And therefore the Concluſion muſt be this, That it is abſolutely impoſſible things ſhould have come to paſs, or continued in their orderly and regular Operations, by meer Fortune and Chance; and without the direction of any Mind, or God. The Divine Mind and Wiſdom hath ſo printed its Seal, or Signature upon the Matter of the whole corporeal World, as that Fortune and Chance could never poſſibly have Counterfeited the ſame.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

AND yet I have more to ſay. For though what has been already obſerved, is a clear Demonſtration of immenſe Power, divine Knowledge, and unſearchable Wiſdom; yet there is ſomething very remarkable behind ſtill, which Proclaims to all the World that Glorious Attribute of God, his infinite Goodneſs, and Benignity alſo: And that we cannot but take notice of, if we conſider that which was propoſed in the next place; namely, the ample Proviſion that is made for the Welfare of all needy Creatures, and even for the temporal good of Mankind.

I have already obſerved the near Relation and Connexion that is between all the Parts of the Univerſe; the neceſſary dependence that one has upon another, together with the great Helps and Miniſtrations whereby each part of the World is ſerviceable and uſeful to its Fellow-Creatures, and does good Offices for them. And therefore I ſhall not need to go over the Creation again, to ſhew you the various

Footſteps of Goodneſs which appear every where, and which are evident Marks of a moſt liberal and munificent Being, that hath provided for the Welfare of the whole. It may be ſufficient for me to confine my Meditations to the Senſitive Parts of the Univerſe, and to take a tranſient View there, of the wiſe and excellent Proviſion which is made for the good of them; for this muſt undeniably prove, That things did not come together by Chance, (that is, without the contrivance of an intending Cauſe) but by the Counſel and Art of a moſt benign Creator, that hath taken care for the good of all things which ſtand in Need.

The Good of an Animal conſiſteth in the Exiſtence of its Nature, and in the Enjoyment of its own Being, with Pleaſure and Safety: I mean as far as the Enjoyment ſuits with the Wellfare of the reſt: And 'tis well worth the while to obſerve what due Proviſion is made accordingly for it in both theſe reſpects; *Firſt*, For its Production; and then, *Secondly*, for the Preſervation of it afterwards.

1. *Firſt*,

1. *Firſt*, For its Production: How ſolicitous doth blind Nature ſeem to be, in preparing all things neceſſary for a Senſitive Creature's Formation? in drawing and laying out all the Parts of it after the beſt and moſt proper manner? in cheriſhing the rude *Fœtus* till it is come to its due Perfection and Proportions? and in ſupplying it with Nouriſhment by myſterious Means, before its coming into a wide World? Every the leaſt Bird in the Shell, is fed with a red Subſtance which Nature conveys into its Bowels through a Vein provided on purpoſe to Miniſter that Aliment for its growth, till the time of Excluſion. In Creatures which give Suck, there are Navel-Veſſels prepared in the Womb, to tranſmit the Nouriſhing Juice from the Parent to its Young; which Veſſels upon its Production, cloſe up of themſelves; and then the Nouriſhment leaving its former Courſe, is directed from the Womb to the Paps; where Natural Inſtinct teaches the tender thing to ſeek its Suſtenance for the future. Theſe ſecret Diſpoſitions, Powers, and Faculties, are formed with a Deſign for

ſome peculiar uſes, and for a certain time; and therefore are impoſſible to be aſcribed to unskilful and erroneous Chance. No; they are all Arguments of great and tender Care; and conſequently of wonderful Wiſdom and Goodneſs in an intelligent Agent over all, who governs and guides Illiterate Nature, that works under him, for the ſubſiſtence and well-being of his meaneſt Creatures.

2. And then for the Preſervation of them being once brought forth, ſo admirably kind and indulgent is Nature in its various Contrivances, that to an obſerving Mind, they are raviſhing Atteſtations of a God of the moſt abundant and extenſive Benignity.

And here let us give ſome Scope and Liberty to our Meditations, and attentively conſider the ample Proviſion that is made. 1. *Firſt*, for the ſupport of Senſitive Creatures in the ſtate of their Minority, or in their firſt helpleſs, neceſſitous Condition: And then, 2. *Secondly*, for their ſafety and welfare when they are grown up, and come to live of themſelves in the World.

1. *Firſt*

1. *Firſt*, For their ſupport in the ſtate of their Minority, when they ſtand moſt in need of Help. Our bleſſed Saviour compared his own great Care for the Preſervation of the *Jews*, to the tender Affections of an Hen towards her Chickens; or rather of every Bird towards its young ones; ὃν τρόπον ὄρνις τὰ νοσσία ἑαυτῆς. *as a Bird gathereth her Brood under her Wings*, *Mat.* 23. 37.) Which ſhall give me warrant to take notice, in the firſt place, of the Proviſion thoſe poor things are directed to make for the Welfare of their Iſſue. The Provident Creature having found out ſome Retirement fit for a Nurſery, then pitch'd upon the moſt convenient part of it, out of the reach of Enemies; then built it with Art inimitable, according to the Temper and Conſtitution of her future Off ſpring; and after long Incubation, and great patience under hunger and thirſt, having at laſt produc'd her new Family, her following Cares are to ſearch for Food that is moſt agreeable to their Natures; to carry it conſtantly to her Brood, that, under God, now call upon her; to miniſter to

them one by one, though ſhe want her ſelf; to ſhelter them from the Annoyances of the Weather; to defend them what ſhe can from Hoſtilities; and at laſt to invite them abroad, and by her own Example to teach them to take Wing, to uſe their Liberty, and by degrees to become their own Feeders and Guardians.

This natural Affection we may obſerve in all other Animals univerſally, though never ſo fierce and ſavage; what Fondneſs they expreſs towards their young; what Securities they ſeek out for them; what Moans they make in their Abſence; with what diligence and eagerneſs they ſearch after them; with what Pleaſure they hold out the Dug to them; and how ſuſpicious they are of the leaſt Danger that may approach. Which univerſal Inſtinct is an invincible Argument of the Exiſtence of a Supreme, Beneficent Being, that hath fixt in the whole common Animal Nature this inſeparable Diſpoſition, to be an Inſtrument in his Hand, or like a Providore under him, to take care for the Welfare of every poor Creature, before it can take care or provide for it ſelf.

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And to demonſtrate yet that theſe things are not the Effects of undeſigning Chance, but the Operations of a provident and good God, it is further obſervable, that according to the ſtanding Law, and ordinary Courſe of Nature, no Senſitive Creature comes into the World till the things neceſſary for its Support are ready. There is a Breaſt prepared and repleniſhed with Milk, for every Child of Man: There is an Udder for the Lamb, and Paps for all other ſuch-like Animals: And *Tully* obſerved long ago, that the more prolifick any Animal is, and the more young ones it is to ſuckle, the more in number are thoſe little Bottles of Life: Others have obſerved, that Birds breed in Seed-time, when the Worm is turned up, and the Corn caſt into the Ground; That many living Creatures fall in the Spring, when the tender Graſs, and other Nutritive Plants, are provided for their Food: That the Eggs of Silk-Worms are hatched when Mulberry-Trees begin to Bud, and put forth their Leaves, whereon thoſe precious Inſects are to feed: That the Waſp is not wont to appear till after the Summer Solſtice, when thoſe Fruits which

Mr. *Boyle's* high Veneration, *&c.*

Mr. *Ray.*

which are for their Food, begin to ripen: That the Caterpiller is bred on Leaves, which are their proper Aliment; That other Inſects (as the Bee for one) that at Breeding-time can find no Aliment abroad, have it at home prepared and laid up before-hand by their induſtrious Parents. To which many Obſervations more might be added, to ſhew that for every Mouth that is brought into the World, there is agreeable Meat ready, and in its Seaſon; and that as there are varieties of Animals for varieties of Fruits, that nothing of the Creation may be loſt; ſo both Animals and Fruits are produc'd at their proper times, that when the one wants, the other is at Hand to anſwer its Neceſſities. Now methinks no Man ſhould be ſo falſe to his own Faculties, as to think it reaſonable to believe, that theſe appoſite and ſuitable Preparations were made by Chance, which are ſuch pregnant Arguments of great Wiſdom and Benignity. And yet hereunto I muſt ſubjoin this one Remark more, That, as convenient and fit Nouriſhment is ſeaſonably provided and made ready for all, ſo that the Appetites of all Crea-

Creatures are correſponding, and adapted to that Proviſion which is proper for their Suſtenance. Though during the whole time of their Formation they were fed ſecretly, without any Art, or Appetite of their own, and without any uſe of their Mouths; yet upon their Production they begin to crave, and ſeek for their Nutriment another way. We ſee daily in every Species of Animals that live by Milk, how ſoon they long for the Pap; how they reach after the Pap, and make towards the Pap, and open their Mouths for it, as if they underſtood that the former way of Nutrition is now out of Doors, and at an End. Now here our Scepticks, who derive all things from Chance, ſhould conſider, how young Animals come to obſerve this conſtant, uniform, and ſtated Method; as if they were ſenſible that the firſt Courſe of Nature now faileth; that their Aliment now runs to another place, and therefore they muſt have recourſe thither, where their Food now lieth. There is ſomething in them, (whatever it be) that doth regularly direct, and as it were teach them, to act after this proper manner; And to

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ſay it is meer Nature, is nothing to the purpoſe, or at leaſt that which does not come home to the point: For this Nature is in Creatures which are irrational, nay, at their loweſt ſtate of Irrationality, and before they have any the leaſt Experience to guide them; and in ſuch a ſtate, Nature alone, and of it ſelf, muſt needs be as rude and ignorant, and as liable to Irregularities, as Chance it ſelf is. Therefore if we will hearken to Reaſon, and ſpeak according to Reaſon, we muſt conclude, That the firſt Appetites and Motions in theſe poor young Creatures, proceed from a certain inviſible Principle, which at the firſt moment of their formation was fixt in them by a wiſe and beneficent Agent, under whom it Operates neceſſarily, and without any conſciouſneſs of its own, in conformity to his Will, for the Welfare and Support of his Creatures in their moſt needy Condition.

2. And here let us paſs on to obſerve, *Secondly*, the Proviſion that is made for their Safety when they are grown up, and come to live of their ſelves. And here, to caſt things into

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a clear Method, we ſhould conſider, what Proviſion is made 1. *Firſt*, For their protection from outward Aſſaults; 2. For their defence againſt untimely Deaths.

1. For the Protection of Creatures from outward Aſſaults, Nature hath furniſhed many ſorts of them with means proper for Reſiſtance; ſome with Armature on their Heads, to puſh and Gore; ſome with Teeth, to rend an Enemy; ſome with Hoofs, to ſtrike off Dangers; divers with variety of other Weapons, which are fit for their preſervation: Nor are any Animals that are to ſecure their Lives by Reſiſtance, left defenceleſs. Nay, it is obſervable of ſuch, that as their Strength is ſuitable chiefly in thoſe parts which ſerve for their preſervation, ſo is their Boldneſs and Courage proportionable, eſpecially when they are brought into Streights, and into imminent Danger. Nature indeed hath been accuſed by ſome as a kind of Step-Mother to Man, for bringing him into the World in a naked, defenceleſs Condition. But it ſhould be conſidered, that as Man hath Hands and Arms to uſe for his Safety,

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ſo is he endu'd with intellectual Faculties, to form a thouſand Weapons and Stratagems for his preſervation. Beſides, Man is naturally a ſocial Creature, fitted to live under Polity and Laws, and to act according to the Eternal Rules of Goodneſs and Righteouſneſs; which are far more agreeable to a Rational Nature, than bruti ſh Violence is, and would be the moſt effectual Means for the Welfare of all Mankind, if they were but carefully obſerved. To accommodate the Words of the Prophet to this purpoſe, *Iſa.* 11. *Were righteouſneſs the girdle of our loyns, and faithfulneſs the girdle of our reins, the wolf might dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child might lead them. The ſucking child might play on the hole of the aſp, and the weaned child might put his hand on the cockatrice-den*; Nor would there be any hurt or deſtruction in the World. In ſhort, as Self-preſervation is the firſt Principle in Nature, ſo is every Creature endu'd with Faculties and Defenſatives for their Preſervation as long as the Powers of Nature are to hold: which

which ſhews that a moſt wiſe and beneficent Being hath formed every thing for its Good.

2. Many other Creatures are directed by Nature to preſerve themſelves by flight: Not only the Fowls of the Air, but divers ſorts of four-footed Animals on Earth, eſpecially ſuch as are of a more timorous temper. And accordingly as their Organs of ſenſation are artificially fitted to diſcover dangers at a diſtance, ſo are thoſe muſcular Parts which ſerve for ſwiftneſs much larger in proportion, than in other Creatures, to quicken and maintain their Motions: A plain Argument that thoſe Inſtruments of Celerity were framed, not by rude, unintelligent Fortune, but by the contrivance of an intending Cauſe, whoſe Goodneſs is over all his Works.

3. Others are taught to abſcond in holes and cavities of the Earth; and leſt their cold Sanctuaries ſhould prove as Fatal to them as external violence, Nature makes them Coats of Fur, and ſuch ſuitable Integuments to keep them warm.

4. Laſtly,

4. Laſtly, Whereas there is utter Enmity between divers ſenſitive Creatures, thoſe Animals which are moſt expoſed to danger from others, are endued with a natural Inſtinct which inables them, both to be ſenſible of their Enemy at the firſt ſight, and to provide, what they can, againſt the danger. The innocent Lamb runs preſently from the Wolf, though it never ſaw a Wolf before. Many ſorts of Birds are frighted at the firſt ſight of Fowls of Prey, and endeavour with all poſſible ſpeed to eſcape from them. The Elephant when he goes to ſleep, hides the end of his long Trunk in the Ground, ſo that nothing but Air can get in, leſt his natural Enemy, the Mouſe, ſhould enter in, and creep into his Bowels. The Crocodile that is in continual Danger from that *Ægyptian* Animal, the Ichneumon, is guarded by the watchful attendance of another Animal, the Trochilus, that awakens the ſleeping Crocodile, when the Ichneumon is preparing to run into his Mouth. Many ſuch remarkable Obſervations might be collected out of Natural Hiſtories, which ſhew what various

Jo. Johnſton, admirand. quadrup. c. 14.

various Methods Nature uſeth for the preſervation of living Creatures from Aſſaults and Hurt. And becauſe Nature of it ſelf is a thing (if we ſpeak ſtrictly) without all Providence, Care, or Thought, Reaſon will oblige us to conclude, that there is a God over Nature; or a moſt wiſe and benign Being, that directs it in operating for the good of all.

2. Which will yet further appear, if we conſider, in the ſecond Place, the Proviſion that is made for the Defence of Creatures againſt untimely Deaths. And here many things might fall under our Meditations, ſhould we look over the Works of Nature particularly: As 1. *Firſt*, touching that ſufficiency of proper Food, which is provided every where for the ſupport of their Beings, and for the pleaſure of their Lives, as far as the enjoyment of their Lives, is conſiſtent with the Welfare of the whole Univerſe. 2. *Secondly*, Touching the aptitude and fitneſs of thoſe Parts wherewith every Species is provided, for the gathering and digeſting of their proper Suſtenance: So that by the Structure of an Animal's Body

Body, eſpecially in and about the Mouth, it is no hard matter to conjecture what ſort of Food is moſt ſuitable to its Nature, and how, and in what places it is commonly gather'd; as for inſtance, by the form and length of a Bird's Beak, you may gueſs what it lives on, and where its proper Aliment doth for the moſt part lie. Theſe are plain Arguments of a provident and good God, that in every reſpect hath taken effectual Care, that none of his Creatures ſhould periſh for want of Suſtenance, or for want of Faculties and Powers to receive that Portion which his moſt liberal Hand giveth unto all.

But theſe Obſervations would carry us back to ſome Subjects which we have paſt through already; and therefore I muſt wave them here; and ſhall employ my Thoughts upon the Conſideration of that Proviſion which is made for Man chiefly, for his preſent good and ſafety, and for the preſervation of his Life, as long as it is fit for him to live in this preſent World.

Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth? Are not his days alſo like the days of an hireling? ſaith *Job*, *Chap.* 7. 1. Yes;

Yes; *His days are determined; the number of his months are with God, who hath appointed his bounds that he cannot paſs*, *Job* 14 5. By which appointed time is meant the natural Period of Humane Life, or, that limited Courſe, beyond which all the Power and Strength of Nature cannot hold now, ſince the Sentence of Death hath paſt upon Mankind. Indeed, before the Fall, our Parents were in an immortal State, and had they never ſinned, they ſhould have continued immortal in this World (eſpecially by eating of the Tree of Life) till God had thought it fit to tranſlate them alive out of this World into a better. When once the Decree came out, *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return*; it was appointed unto all Men once to die; and ever ſince the Faculties of Humane Nature have been ſo ſtinted and weakned, that with all our Care and Endeavours, we cannot ſtay very long here. Now, by an untimely Death I mean that which comes before the Term which is appointed and prefixt to ones Nature; and as ſinful Creatures as we are, ſuch ample Proviſion is made in all parts of the World for the health

and ſupport of its Inhabitants during the Courſe of Nature, that if People were but wiſe and provident themſelves in the uſe of that Proviſion, their End would not be ſo precipitated as it commonly is by Men's own Faults: Which neceſſarily argues the Exiſtence of a moſt beneficent and gracious God, that careth for us all: For whereas theſe two things are neceſſary to defend a Man from an untimely Death; 1. Convenient Nouriſhment, to keep up the Faculties of Nature in a due Vigour; and 2. Proper Medicinal Applications, to recover Nature, when by ſome ugly Accident it begins to droop: In both theſe reſpects ſuch ample Proviſion is made for our Preſervation, as is impoſſible with reaſon to be aſcrib'd to any Cauſe, but the Providence and Bounty of a good God.

1. *Firſt*, There is provided convenient Nouriſhment for all; that is, ſuch as is ſuitable to People of all Conditions. 2. Such as is ſuitable to the Quality of all Climates. And 3. Such as is ſuitable to all Tempers and Conſtitutions: All which could never have been,

been without the Counſel and Skill of an intelligent Being, that ordereth and diſpoſeth every thing in the World after the beſt way.

1. Convenient Food is provided for People of all Ranks, States, and Conditions. Becauſe the ordinary ſorts of People were to be provided for, as well as the great and noble; (and indeed much rather, conſidering that the greateſt part of Mankind doth conſiſt of People of an ordinary Condition) therefore Wiſdom and Goodneſs hath made that the fitteſt and moſt agreeable, the moſt natural Food, which is ordinarily and commonly had; that which is the next at Hand; that which is moſt eaſie and ready to be gotten. Things which lie more out of the way, ſerve rather for Mens Luxury, as Luxury ſerveth to breed Diſeaſes: Thoſe common Meats which anſwer the ordinary Neceſſities of Mankind, are moſt Salutary and Natural. Of the Truth hereof this is a clear Argument, becauſe ſuch Proviſions, if moderately uſed at a time, Nature is not offended with, but rather craveth for, though daily taken: Whereas Dainties, which

are more ſcarce, and harder to be provided, and which gratifie the Fancy rather than ſupply our Wants, the Appetite is ſoon cloy'd with, and becomes averſe to. How ſenſual ſoever we are, neither the moſt Craving, nor the moſt wanton People would be tied, or endure to live long upon thoſe By-Entertainments, and far-fetch'd Rarities, which Woods and Foreſts, Rocks and Mountains afford. But no temperate Perſon is ſurfeited with Bread from the Field, which is the common Food of the World. 'Tis every Day repeated with Hunger, as well as ſwallowed with Delight. And ſo it is with other ordinary ſorts of Nutriment; they find a kind Welcome to Nature, and leave behind 'em a grateful Appetite. Upon which account the mean Man ſhareth with the Mighty in the Comforts of this Life; and hath equal reaſon to rejoyce in the good things before him, and to bleſs a provident Hand which ſcattereth theſe neceſſary Comforts without diſcrimination, as the Manna was ſcattered in the Wilderneſs; *He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack*, *Exod.* 16. 18. Every Man

Man gathereth according to his eating, and that which is agreeable to his Appetite and Taſte: Which would be Nonſenſe to aſcribe to undiſcerning Chance, becauſe it is apparently the effect of Preſcience, Wiſdom, and unlimited Goodneſs; and therefore ſhews, that there is a Being of the moſt extenſive Kindneſs and Benignity, who ſhutteth not up his Bowels of Compaſſion from any; but, as he maketh Poor, and maketh Rich, ſo he holdeth out his Hands like a common Providore, to ſupport all indifferently, and giveth to every Man a convenient Portion.

2. Ample Proviſion is made, as for all People of all Conditions, ſo for the Neceſſities of all Climates and Nations in the World. Though in every particular Country there is not the ſame plenty, nor the ſame ſorts of Proviſion, for a weighty reaſon which I ſhall preſently take notice of; yet no Nation is ſo barren and deſtitute, as not to yield its Inhabitants (eſpecially its Natives) a competency and ſufficiency of things needful for them, eſpecially where a Nation is well Peo-

pled and well cultivated. Some abound with groſſer kinds of Food; others with variety of Pulſes; others with peculiar Plants and Roots, and generous Wines; others with choice of excellent Fruits; and others with ſingular ſorts of Trees, which anſwer variety of uſes, and ſerve not only for the Neceſſities, but alſo for the Conveniencies and Delights of People; as (what a learned Author obſerves) the Cinnamon-Trees of *Ceylon*, which yield thoſe People manifold Advantages: The Dropping-Trees in ſome parts of *Africa*, which ſerve inſtead of Rain, and freſh Springs: The Aloes-*Muricatæ* in ſome places of *America*, which afford the Natives every thing their Neceſſities require: The Coco-Trees of the *Indians*, which ſupply them with Bread, Water, Wine, Milk, Oil, Honey, Cloaths, together with various ſorts of Utenſils; in ſhort, with every thing almoſt they ſtand in need of. Beſides many other Trees, which another Author mentions; that celebrated Tree in *Peru*, the Leaves whereof ſatisfie both Hunger and Thirſt, and preſerve Men in Health, and their Spirits in Vigour: The Hovo-Trees in *Caſtella-*

Mr. *Ray.* ubi ſupra.

Dr. *Heylin's* Coſmog.

Caſtella-Aurea, whoſe Bloſſoms, Bark, Leaves, and Roots, are for ſo many great Uſes: The Magney-Trees in *New-Spain*, whoſe Tops, Rind, Boughs, and forty ſorts of Leaves, ſerve for variety of excellent Purpoſes: The Mignolo-Trees in *Guinea*, the Bark whereof yields a Liquor more pleaſant, ſtrong, and nouriſhing than the choiceſt Wines: The Palm-Trees in *Ægypt*, which are ſaid to yield whatſoever is neceſſary to the Life of Man. To which few Obſervations a vaſt number of the like kind might be added, if a Man would make it his buſineſs to take, though but a ſummary Account of the great Proviſion that is made for the Subſiſtence of Mankind in all the known Parts of the World. Briefly; as it is in the Fabrication of a Man, if Nature be defective in one part, it commonly makes amends in another; ſo is it in the Model and Frame of every Country, the Wants of it, in ſome reſpects, are compenſated by an Abundance, or at leaſt by a Sufficiency in others: Nor is any Country ſo deſtitute, and at a loſs, but that it is able to help it ſelf very well, either by Induſtry imploy'd about the Stores of Nature at home, or by ſome

ſorts or other of Riches which it is liberally ſupplyed with, to maintain Commerce and Traffick abroad.

3. The reaſon why there is not an equal plenty of the ſame things in every Nation, I take to be this; Becauſe the ſame things are not fit and proper for all People. And this, *Thirdly*, I cannot but look upon as a pregnant Argument of a Providence and a God, that in all parts of the World ſuch Proviſion is made for the Suſtenance of People, as is moſt ſuitable to their Tempers and Conſtitutions. In Cold or more Temperate Climates, where the Air is more Nitrous, and where, conſequently, the Appetites of People are the ſtronger, and their Conſtitutions require the ſtronger Food, there groſſer Nouriſhment is more agreeable; and accordingly we find, that in ſuch Parts, and among ſuch People, there is the greater plenty of the Fleſh of Beaſts, for their conſtant Support. Abundance of this kind of Diet would not be ſo ſuitable to Sanguine Tempers in Hot Climates, but rather would create inordinate Fermentations of Blood, Fevers, Calentures and

and Frenzies: And therefore ſuch Nations are better ſtor'd with Roots, Pulſes, and Plants, and with various Fruits of the Vine, to correct the more Phlegmatick part of them, and to carry off the Crudities and Flatulency thereof. Other places abound with Fruits that are fragrant, refreſhing, and cooling, as being moſt proper to preſerve the Inhabitants in a State of Health, and a due Temper. The great plenty of Rices in the Eaſt; and of Maize, which is the great Food of the *Americans*; and ſuch other peculiar ſorts of Nutriment in other Countries, are provided for the peculiar Conſtitutions of People every where, and adapted to them. And ſo are their Drinks, if taken in a due meaſure. For which reaſon, though the Vine be a Plant which generally grows in all Nations of the World, becauſe of general Uſe, yet ſome Oriental Parts are quite deſtitute of it: But (ſays my Author) the want of it is ſupply'd with a pleaſant Drink, made of the Juice of other Fruits, more natural to thoſe People than the other, and ſo preſervative of Life, that the People there are reported to be longer liv'd

Dr. *Heylin*, pag. 924.

liv'd than in any other Parts. In *China* it is ſupplyed by an Herb, out of which they preſs a delicate Juice, which doth not only ſerve them inſtead of Wine, but preſerveth their Health, and freeth them from many of thoſe Inconveniencies which the immoderate uſe of Wine doth breed in others: Which ſhort Remarks (not to make any more of this Nature now) ſhew that there is a ſuperintending, wiſe, and good Being over all Men, that doth diſpoſe and order the things of Nature in all parts of the World after the beſt manner, and for the preſent Benefit and Advantage of every Man: For to adapt and fit things thus, according to the Neceſſities of all People, and to make them ſo exactly congruous and anſwerable, cannot be the fortuitous Effect of improvident Chance, but the admirable Works of an intelligent, contriving, and moſt beneficent Deity.

Id. pag. 865.

2. Yet it will not be amiſs to obſerve a little, what Proviſion there is made too of proper, Medicinal Remedies, to recover the infirm Nature of Man, when it begins to droop; to con-

convince Men yet further of the Exiſtence of a God, that begrudgeth not any Man that Good which conſiſteth in the Enjoyment of himſelf, till his appointed time cometh.

What variety of Drugs Nature is furniſhed with to this purpoſe, is neither neceſſary nor proper for me to note here. The thing I would briefly obſerve is this; That ſuch Medicinal Remedies are provided for all Men, and thoſe ſo fitly ſuited to all incident Griefs, as are enough to ſatisfie any reaſonable Man, that there is a Divine, Benign Nature in the World, that of his Infinite Goodneſs taketh care of us all. And this will appear if we conſider the Proviſion which is made, 1. Againſt ſuch common Diſeaſes as Mankind in general are ſubject unto: 2. Againſt ſuch as are incident more peculiarly to ſome Nations.

1. Firſt, There are very many Diſeaſes which are incident to all People in general. For as all Mankind conſiſt of the ſame common Nature, ſo is this common Nature ſubject in all places to decay and diſſolution; nor are there any parts in ones Body but what are liable

liable to the ſame Infirmities and Griefs, which affect the reſt of *Adam*'s Generations. Now that People may not unavoidably come to an untimely End, only for want of preſent, neceſſary help, there is all over the World a ſufficiency of proper Means, if Men will but take the pains to diſcover the Faculties of thoſe things which Nature affords, and be careful to apply and uſe them after a due manner. And as our neceſſary Food is, ſo are our neceſſary Medicaments ordinarily and commonly to be had: For no Man is forced to languiſh on, and die, under a Dropſie or Fever, a Conſumption or Flux, or ſuch like uſual Diſtemper, meerly for want of this one particular Root, or that Flower, or that Drug, which cannot be procured at Home, but muſt be fetch'd from beyond the Seas by a long Voyage and great Expence. The things we moſt need are within our reach, and hard by, almoſt in every Wood, Field, and Garden: And though ſome humorous and vain Perſons are ſeldom pleaſed but with what is ſcarce and coſtly, yet Nature is gratified with what is common, as moſt ſuitable to its Neceſſities, moſt proper and effectual for its relief.

relief. The Ancient *Egyptians* had their Garden-Deities; not that they look'd upon them as Gods, but as great preſervatives of Life, bleſt with a Divine Power derived, as they thought, from the Objects of their Worſhip. And hence, perhaps, it might be that the *Jews* who had lived ſo long among them, luſted in the Wilderneſs for their Old *Egyptian* Fare, the Melons, the Cucumbers, the Leeks, the Onions, and the Garlick; becauſe they had by their long Experience found thoſe things ſo Beneficial in a Countrey, where the Air was wont to be corrupted by the Inundations of that vaſt River *Nilus*. Generally ſpeaking, Domeſtick Remedies are the kindeſt Friends to every ones Nature, and the beſt Reſtoratives of it; and it ſeems a ſenſible Argument of Divine Wiſdom and Unlimited Bounty; that is, of the Exiſtence of a Provident and Good God, that ſuch Proviſion is made ſo aptly and liberally for high and low, for Men of all Ranks, Conditions and Ages, and for People of the meaneſt Fortunes; that the precious Life given to us all may not be ſnatch'd from us (if we be but Provident our ſelves) till Nature hath done her whole Work;

Work; till it be time for us to go hence; till that proper Seaſon comes which *Job*'s Friend ſpake of; the Seaſon when a Man ſhall be ripe and fit to drop into another World; *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in its ſeaſon*, Job 5. 26.

2. Secondly, There are ſome Diſeaſes which Phyſicians call Endemial; meaning ſuch as are more peculiar and familiar to ſome Nations. And if Travellers would accurately obſerve what proper Proviſion is made againſt ſuch Diſtempers, throughout the ſeveral Parts of the known World, they might oblige us with ſuch a fair account of the Divine Goodneſs, as that the curioſity of Men could not deſire a fairer for its kind. In divers Nations their proper Food is their proper Phyſick too. In many places the natural Baths, and other medicinal Waters of the Countrey, ſerve to carry off Diſeaſes that are moſt incident. In ſome parts of *Africk* every one is ſaid to be his own Phyſician;

Endemii (morbi) ſunt, tum qui ex putridis aquarum, terrarum, vel cadaverum expirationibus orti ſunt; tum etiam quibuſdam regionibus familiares, ut Phthiſis, Luſitanis, Struma Hiſpanis & Alpinis, Hydrocale Nerbonenſi Galliæ, omnes quidem ex aeris gravitate nati. *Jo. Fernel.* de abdit. rerum cauſis, lib. 2.

ſician; becauſe all of them are ſo much acquainted with the Specificks of their Countrey, as they think is neceſſary and enough for the Preſervation and Recovery of their Health. In *Perſia* they have no exact Methods of Phyſick: Their *China* Drinks, and the common Pulſes and Roots of their own Growth, together with a regular Diet, are their greateſt Preſervatives of Life. In the *Eaſt-Indies* its ſaid that there are no Phyſicians, but ſuch as attend Kings and Princes. As for the ordinary ſort, after the Rains are fallen, and that it is time to gather Herbs, the People go out into the Fields and gather ſuch Simples which they know to be proper for ſuch Diſeaſes as reign among them. Others tell us of their choice Drugs, their Plant called Bettele, and the Fruit of their Tree Areca, are their moſt ſovereign Preſervatives. In ſome places where Fevers are wont to reign, thoſe Trees are common, whence that celebrated Medicament is fetch'd, uſually called, the Jeſuits Bark. In thoſe parts of *America* where a filthy Diſeaſe is Hereditary and Epidemical among Young and Old of both Sexes, thoſe Regions abound with Guajacan and Sarſa, which

Mandelſlo's Trav. l 3.

Tavernier, l. 5. cap. 15.

Id. Part 2. l. 1.

Mandelſlo's Trav. in *Ind.*

Heylen of Amer. *Fernel.* de lue c. 10.

which are ſaid to be proper for it. In this, and ſome other *Northern* Climates, where the Scurvey prevails, and ſome other Maladies which depend upon it, a peculiar Herb aboundeth, which thence takes its Name; beſides other proper Plants which grow in every Garden; and perhaps above all, the Elder which is to be found almoſt in every Hedge: Which brings to my Mind the Obſervation of a curious Authour, I have mentioned more than once, that there are ſuch Species of Plants produced in every Countrey, as are moſt proper and convenient for the Meat and Medicine of Men and Animals that are bred and inhabit there. Inſomuch that *Solenander* writes, That from the frequency of the Plants which ſpring up naturally in any Region, he could eaſily gather what Endemial Diſeaſes the Inhabitants thereof were ſubject to.

Mr. Ray, p. 104.

And what can this argue, but great and wonderful Goodneſs in a provident Being above, who taketh ample Care of the Lives of his Creatures? With what Face can any Man aſcribe all this commodious and apt Diſpoſition of things to Chance, which is ſuch a palpable

pable Evidence of Wiſdom and Benignity? Should you look into a great Family, or an Hoſpital, and there obſerve what Proviſion is made for the whole Houſe-hold; ſufficient and agreeable Suſtenance prepared for every the meaneſt Retainer to it; skilful Artiſts daily attending with proper Remedies for Griefs and Sickneſſes of all ſorts; and every thing diſpoſed ſo orderly, and after ſuch a Congruous, Liberal, and Charitable manner, as ſpeaks Compaſſion and Goodneſs towards all: Would you not think it reaſonable to conclude that certainly there is a wiſe and beneficent Governour preſiding, by whoſe Directions and under whoſe Care all Miniſtrations are performed in ſuch a way as is ſuitable to every ones Neceſſities? Why, much rather may we think it reaſonable to conclude that there is a God preſiding over the whole World, under whoſe unlimited Providence Nature doth regularly and conveniently miniſter to the Wants of all People. The Families of the Earth are innumerable; their Habitations vaſtly diſtant; their Neceſſities preſſing, conſtant, various, and infinite; And what but in-

finite Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs could provide ſo amply, and appoſitely for them all? Nature, its true, does it immediately; but, as hath been ſhewn, Nature of it ſelf is an uncontriving, unthinking Thing that acteth in the Dark, and therefore it infers the Exiſtence of an Agent above and over it, that underſtands for it; that hath put it into a ſtated Method, and ſtill directs and employs it under him to miniſter thus to the Neceſſities of Men every where, who do, or ſhould at leaſt underſtand far better than Nature does, whence all that Bounty and Liberality comes, which repleniſheth the World.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

HAving proceeded thus far upon this large Speculation, concerning the excellent State of the World, as a clear Proof that there is a moſt wiſe and good Being who framed it. I find but one thing remaining for us to look into; and that is the admirable Frame of our own rational Nature, which I have reſerved for the laſt Conſideration, becauſe it is the brighteſt and moſt glorious manifeſtation of a Deity. For if it be made appear that our rational Part is ſo excellent, as that it could not be formed by any thing leſs than an Agent that is eſſentially Divine, and tranſcendently Perfect, humane Reaſon muſt extort this Confeſſion from all Men, That there is a Being incomprehenſibly Excellent, which formed ſo excellent a Creature as our humane Nature is.

In Diſcourſing then upon this Subject, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew theſe Two things. 1. Firſt, Wherein the Excellence of humane Nature does conſiſt. 2. Secondly, That this Excellence was derived, not from the caſual Mo-

dification of ſtupid Matter, but from the Agency of an intelligent Cauſe that is eminently and abſolutely Perfect.

1. Firſt, Touching the Excellence of our humane Nature. By our humane Nature, is underſtood ſtrictly the intellectual, thinking, and rational Thing within us which we call the Soul: And when I ſpake of its Excellence, I mean its eſſential Perfection, before Vice comes to deprave and hurt it: And I ſpake too of a comparative Perfection; not meaning that it is Excellent in ſuch a ſublime Degree, as a Deity is ſuppoſed to be; but Excellent in its Kind, and in compariſon of the other Parts of this viſible World. Now that every rational Soul is thus Excellent, will appear both from its Nature and Faculties.

In its Nature it is, 1. Firſt, Immaterial. For it is a diſtinct thing from Matter; and the Properties of it are quite different from the Properties of Matter. It is of the Nature of Matter, to be locally extended, as a Wall is, part by part, and one part by another in a palpable Series of Contiguity; to move as a Stone does, as it is moved forcibly by

by ſome other Agent, and to communicate its Motion to a corporeal Subſtance by ſtrokes impreſt upon it; to be wholly paſſive to external Violence; to be in an utter ſtate of Reſt, when Force is not offered; to be as Senſeleſs as a Stone, and as void of Cogitation; and when it is ſtirred and agitated, to be deſtitute of all Apprehenſion which way, or in what manner, or to what end it moves: Theſe and the like dull Properties eſſentially and neceſſarily belong to Matter. There is as much difference between them and the Attributes of the rational Soul, as between Death and Life. Becauſe this is a buſie Thing, prone and ready to enquire into the qualities of Objects; to diſcover their Natures; to apprehend Ideas; to commit Notions to Memory for a long time; to diſcern and diſtinſtuiſh between Truth and Falſhood, and between Right and Wrong; to infer Concluſions from Premiſes; to ſpin Opinions out of a train of Thoughts; to judge what is to be Received, and what is to be Rejected; to exert an Appetite towards that which is Good, and to reſt with Complacency and Delight in the Enjoyment of it. Nay,

beſides all this, to be alſo in its operations Self-active and Self-determining, is Eſſential to it. For the Soul of Man is not pulled, or forced, dragged, or drawn, or thruſt on like a Machine. No; the Principle of its Actions is within its ſelf; nor can any thing move it, but by its own conſent and voluntary compliance. Indeed outward Objects make Impreſſions upon it; and ſuch as do affect it, and incline it to act according as things appear to be either deſirable or hurtful. But this is not done by any violent, neceſſitating Impulſe, like the Force impreſt upon a common Engine; but in a Moral way, by perſwaſion and allurement, and by the intervening uſe of Reaſon, which judgeth of the Object whether it may be choſen or refuſed, and accordingly dictates and directs: So that when the Soul reſolves upon Actions, and comes to exert its Power, it determines it ſelf, being ſollicited thereunto by Temptations and Arguments from the inviting Appearance of an Object, but not driven to it by irreſiſtible Violence. For in many Caſes we do reſiſt Offers, though they be very Tempting; becauſe the Motives for our compliance are not ſo ſtrong,

as

as the Reaſons which are againſt it: And when the Reaſons on each hand ſeem equally fair, the Soul is unreſolved, and in ſuſpence, hanging in doubt, *in æquilibrio*, like Scales that are exactly even till ſome Grains be added, ſome more Arguments offered on the one ſide which outweigh all on the contrary, and ſo turn and caſt the Scale, and bring the Soul to a Determination. Of theſe things every Man hath daily Experience in his own Breaſt: We all feel in our ſelves this our native Liberty and determining Power. And hence it follows, That after all the Diſputes about the Subſtance of the rational Soul what it is, we may certainly conclude what it is not. It cannot be any material, corporeal Subſtance, though you ſuppoſe it to be never ſo fine and thin; becauſe its Operations are quite different from the Motions of the moſt ſubtile Body. They proceed not from any neceſſitating Cauſe; nor are they carried on after a neceſſitating Manner; nor are they brought to any neceſſary Reſult, as the Motions of Matter are (theſe are ſtill impreſt upon it by ſome neceſſitating thing which is without, and foreign to it.) But the

Soul of Man hath a Principle of Freedom and voluntary Activity within it ſelf, and in its Nature, whereby it is apt to begin, and order, and govern, and perfect its own Actions, as its own Reaſon directeth, and as it ſelf judgeth to be moſt convenient and beſt.

2. And becauſe it is immaterial, it muſt follow, that in its own Nature it is immortal alſo; which is the Second Argument of its Excellence, if compar'd with all the other parts of this viſible World.

That this thing may be rightly underſtood, we muſt conſider, that there is a twofold Life in Man. 1. The Life of the *Compoſitum* (as they call it) or the Life of the whole Man; that Life which reſults from the Vital Union between Soul and Body. This cannot be thought immortal, becauſe we ſee it every Day deſtroy'd by the ſeparation of thoſe two Subſtances, Soul and Body, from each other. 2. There is the Original Life of the Soul it ſelf, conſider'd ſingly and ſeparately, as a diſtinct thing from the Body. This Life is, I conceive, a ſtate of Vigour and Activity, and a ſtate which

which is peculiar and proper to the Soul. Now this is immortal; that is, though the Body turns to Duſt and Aſhes, yet the Soul continues a living Being ſtill; or ſubſiſteth on in a ſtate of Vigour; ſo that the Nature of it is not ſubject to Mortality. For by Mortality is meant a proneneſs or tendency in a Being to a Diſſolution of it, upon the failing of that Principle of Activity within it, which we call Life. And three things are requiſite to render a thing Mortal; as we ſee by every Day's Experience, in all Creatures which naturally conſume away and die. 1. There muſt be a Mixture of contrary Qualities, as Heat and Cold, and the like. 2. There is a corruptibility of Humours upon the Prevalence and Predominancy of one Quality over the others. 3. And *Thirdly*, a Diviſibility of the Parts upon and after the over-powering the Faculties and Temperament of Nature. So that 'tis Matter that is liable to Death; nor can Death be incident to any thing but Matter, nay to corruptible Matter; nor can any corporeal Subſtance be Immortal, till this Corruptible hath put on Incorruption. If then a Being be immaterial,

or

or deſtitute of Bodily Parts, it muſt be in its own Nature immortal too. A Spirit hath not Fleſh, and Bones (and Blood) as every Humane Body hath; and conſequently it cannot be liable to thoſe jarring Elements whereof our Bodies do conſiſt; nor can it of it ſelf be capable of Corruption or Diſſolution of Parts, as our Mortal Bodies are, ſeeing it is ſuppoſed to have no Parts at all to be divided. Therefore ſince the Rational Soul is a Spirit, or ſuch a Being as is incorporeal and immaterial (as I have now ſhew'd it is) it muſt follow, that it is not naturally ſubject to Mortality, as the Body is; becauſe it is utterly void of all Natural Principles of Mortality, and is incorruptible in its Eſſence; and therefore it muſt by the ordinary Neceſſity of its own Nature, as well as by the Will and Pleaſure of a Superiour Being, ſurvive the Body, to receive Rewards or Puniſhments in another World, according to the Quality of its Actions in this.

2. Having thus briefly conſider'd the Nature of every Humane Soul, let us, *Secondly*, take ſome Account of its Excellence

cellence in reſpect of its Faculties and Powers, in order to prove the Exiſtence of a God, as the only Cauſe that could give this Soul a Being.

There are ſome Faculties in a Man which are common to Brute Creatures alſo: As 1. Senſe, or the power of perceiving Idea's impreſt from outward Objects upon the Organs of Senſation; the Eye, Ear, *&c.* 2. Phanſie, or a power of apprehending the ſeeming Suitableneſs or Unſuitableneſs of an Object to its Nature. 3. Memory, or the power of retaining for ſome time the Idea's and Shapes of things ſenſible. 4. Appetite, or a power of moving according as an Object appears, either agreeable or hurtful; being allur'd by the one, or frighted and dampt by the other.

But theſe ſeveral Powers are nothing in compariſon of thoſe noble faculties peculiarly belonging to the Rational Soul; as any Man may perceive that will but ſearch into himſelf, and obſerve what he finds and feels there. For 1. *Firſt*, We find that we have a Power to Think and Conſider; I mean to examine thoſe Objects which are preſented to our outward Senſe; to employ

our

our Minds converſantly about them; to take notice of their Proportions, Forms, and Qualities; to compare one thing with another; to diſcover the Cauſes and Effects of them, ſo that we may penetrate into the inſide of them, and dive into their Natures. Now this no Brute Creature doth, or can do. *The ox*, indeed, *knoweth his owner, and the aſs his maſters crib*; that is, they come to both, being invited and moved thereunto by the appearance of things, which are wont to gratifie the Eye and Palate. But in this there is no ſuch thing as Conſideration, nothing that can properly be call'd Thought; becauſe ſuch Creatures are not capable of enquiring in themſelves, Who, or what their Feeders are? or, What the Subſtance of their Fodder is? or, What produced it? or, How it was provided? or, To what End it ſerves? and, For what Reaſon it is proper and good to be uſed? Acts of this kind are too high for Animals which are meerly Senſitive; Their Phancies go no further than the Crib: They are well ſatisfy'd with the bare enjoyment of that which is before them. The Conſidering part belongs

to

to Man: To obſerve the natural difference between Things and Things; to examine their diſtinct Cauſes, Properties, Diſpoſitions, and Uſes; and ſo to look into their intrinſick Eſſences and Natures; this is the peculiar work and buſineſs of a Soul that is Rational.

2. We find in our ſelves, that we have a power to underſtand alſo; that is, a Faculty and Ability to comprehend the Reaſon, and Condition, and Philoſophy of Matters; nay, to know many things which are not directly obvious to our outward Senſes. That Perception which is in Animals Irrational, is an Idea in the Phancy, deriv'd from thoſe *Effluvium's*, Rays, and Images of external Objects, which are impreſt upon the Hearing, Seeing, Smelling, Taſting, or Feeling-Faculty, and ſo convey'd through the Nerves into the Brain. Theſe are ſenſible Phantaſms; and the poſſeſſing of an Animal with them is properly called Senſation, becauſe the Creature is affected with a ſenſible Object, meerly by the uſe of its Senſes. But Senſation is one thing, and Intellection or Underſtanding

ing is another. This properly is, when a Man's Mind is ſo poſſeſt and enlightned with Intelligible Notions, or with ſuch Idea's as are not ſubject to corporeal Senſe, and therefore ſuch as cannot be ſtampt upon the Mind by Motion or Preſſure from Bodies without us; but ſuch Idea's as ſpring out of the Mind it ſelf, by an active, exerting Power that is native to it. There are many kinds of ſuch intelligible Notions, as do not fall under external Senſe, and yet are very clear and evident to us: As ſeveral Certainties in Mathematicks, which appear from Demonſtration; divers Truths in Natural Philoſophy, which we are convinced of by pure Reaſon; ſeveral Moral Verities, which we are aſſured of, from the immutable Natures of Vice and Virture; ſeveral Doctrines in Theology which our Minds yield us, from the Contemplation of the Divine Attributes and Perfections: Beſides divers ſuch common Notions as theſe, wherein all Mankind are agreed of themſelves, That what hath not any Being, cannot act; That things which agree in one Third, agree among themſelves; That the Cauſe is in order of Nature before

before the Effect; That Equals added unto Equals, do make Equals; That Nothing can produce it ſelf out of Nothing; and the like: Theſe are eternal Truths, which depend not upon Senſe, but upon natural, certain Reaſon; for they would be Truths though there were not any Senſitive Creatures in the World. Now this is a noble Power in the Soul, which ſets it infinitely above the Souls of Irrational Creatures, in that it can act within it ſelf abſtractedly from Matter; and without uſing the Bodily Senſes, can ſpeculate and underſtand thoſe leading Truths, and neceſſary Notions, which are in order to the greateſt Undertakings, and inable the Mind of Man to ſearch into all the Secrets of Nature; to open the Myſteries of the Creation; to invent Arts; to improve Sciences; to preſcribe the moſt commendable Rules of Life; and, in ſhort, to govern the World: All which I ſhall ſhew is an Argument of the Exiſtence of an abſolutely perfect Mind, or a God, that formed the Rational Soul with Divine Faculties and Powers to act under him.

3. *Thirdly*,

3. *Thirdly*, We find in our ſelves a Power to deduce one thing out of another by way of Inference; and by comparing Notions with Notions, and by ſifting them narrowly, to gather and conclude in the End, that this is True, and that Falſe; this is Right, and that Wrong; and ſo to go on, ſtill drawing of Conſequents out of Antecedents; which is uſually call'd Ratiocination, or Mental Diſcourſe. As for Example; Though we diſcern not our own Souls, nor can behold them with our Eyes, yet in regard that we think, and meditate, and reaſon in our ſelves, we ſtrongly conclude, that they are Beings actually exiſting, becauſe it is moſt certain, that what is not, cannot operate. In like manner, though the Being of God be quite out of the Ken of our corporeal Senſes, yet conſidering what bright manifeſtations there are in the World, of wonderful Goodneſs, Power, and Wiſdom, we rightly infer, That it was framed by a Supreme Being, of the moſt adorable and excellent Perfections. And ſo it is in innumerable other Inſtances; though there are ten thouſand things in Nature

ture, whoſe Contextures are not ſubject to the Cognizance of our Senſes, yet by arguing either *à priori*, from the manifeſt Cauſe to the Effect; or *à poſteriori*, from the manifeſt Effect to the Cauſe, we proceed to ſatisfactory Inferences; becauſe if this thing be granted, then, according to the common Principles of Reaſon, that thing will follow. This is to Reaſon, and Argue, and to Diſcourſe in our Minds; and it is a Faculty whereof the Souls of Irrational Creatures are not capable; becauſe fine and cloſe reaſoning is vaſtly above bare and naked Senſation: It requires ſtrong Meditation, great rowling of Thoughts, and a firm linking of Notions to Notions in a Chain; ſo that Rational Premiſes may fairly and regularly draw on Rational Concluſions: All which Brute Creatures can no more do, than they can ſtudy Philoſophy, or underſtand Books of Metaphyſicks and Logick.

4. *Fourthly*, We feel in our ſelves a power of directing us in all our Moral Actions, and of reflecting upon our Actions after they are done; and this we call *Conſcience*, meaning the Judg-

ment of a Man as it relates to the practice of Vertue and Honeſty. There are ſome Actions which are unchangeably good; and others which are immutably Evil: Their Natures are ſo utterly oppoſite, that it is as impoſſible to make Vice Vertue, or Vertue Vice, as it is to reconcile Light and Darkneſs. The Notions of ſuch things every one does carry in himſelf; nor is any Soul of Man ſo void and deſtitute of them, but that the moſt unpoliſht and barbarous People underſtand in ſome meaſure what is Right and Juſt. Accordingly we find ſomething within us, which before an Action is done, tells us ſecretly what is neceſſary, fit, and proper for us to do: And when our unreaſonable Inclinations and Paſſions carry us on to do that which is contrary to thoſe good Dictates, we find ſomething within us, that doth reprehend and blame, and fly upon us, and many times doth wound us ſo, that we are very ſore, and our Minds are full of great Anguiſh and Torment. To which purpoſe are thoſe Words of St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. where ſpeaking of the *Gentiles*, he ſaith, That *though they had not the Law* (written

ten in two Tables, as the *Jews* had) *yet they did by nature the things contain'd in the law, and having not the law, were a law unto themſelves. Which ſhew'd the work of the law written in their hearts; their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts among themſelves either accuſing or elſe excuſing one another.* Now this Faculty of governing and regulating all our Moral Actions, and of paſſing Sentence upon them, is an excellence of the Rational Soul, which cannot be pretended to be in any Animals which are purely Senſitive, how ſagacious ſoever they appear; becauſe Actions natural are the higheſt they can go to. As for the Rules of Sobriety, Righteouſneſs, and Godlineſs, they are wholly deſtitute of them, as deſtitute as a Stone is of Senſe, or as a Plant is of Reaſon. And hence it is that their Souls are mortal. Whether they be altogether material, or ſo neceſſarily depending upon Matter that they cannot ſubſiſt without a Body, I will not now diſpute. No queſtion but they periſh with their Bodies: For having no Law of Morality to act by, they cannot be accountable either for Obedience or Tranſgreſſion, and ſo cannot

not be ſuppoſed to ſurvive, becauſe they are uncapable either of Reward or Puniſhment in another World; as being without all Power of Reflecting, and conſequently of having any Joys or Remorſe of Mind in this.

To conclude this Conſideration; Beſides a Principle of Life, a Power of Senſation, and a Faculty of retaining Idea's which ſpring from things without us, we find in our ſelves ſuch high and exquiſite Powers, that ſuppoſing a Being Angelical, and next to a Deity, was to have been form'd on purpoſe that it ſhould be inveſted with Humane Fleſh, there to diſplay the great Glories of its Nature, we cannot conceive how a Being could have been made more like to an Angel, than the Rational Soul is: A Being that is able to ſearch into the Secrets of Nature, and into the inviſible things of God; to entertain it ſelf with lofty Contemplations; to diſcover recondite myſterious Truths; to open the Treaſures of Philoſophy; to fill the World with Hiſtories of things paſt, and to foreſee things to come, things which naturally muſt, or probably may happen; to know all that a Finite Crea-

Creature is well capable of knowing; to ſet out the juſt Boundaries between Good and Evil; to inform the World how far they may honourably and ſafely go, and what they are at their Peril to avoid; to employ Mankind in the moſt curious Arts; to furniſh them with the moſt delightful and uſeful Sciences; to give meaſures to all States and Princes; to preſcribe to all Societies the trueſt Methods for their Preſervation and Welfare; to ſhew them what noble Ends they are to purſue, and what are the wiſeſt and beſt means of bringing thoſe Ends to paſs; to fit Men for the greateſt and moſt generous Undertakings, and to make them Men of Renown; to inſpire them with laudable Ambition, and upon animating Hopes to found glorious Atchievements, and to erect the Fortunes of Kingdoms; to make us aſpire towards the higheſt and moſt excellent Enjoyments: In ſhort, to help us to do all the great things that can be done by mortal Creatures here; and in the midſt of our Labours under the Sun, to ſhew us a Glimpſe of another World, and to fit us for a Bleſſed and Eternal State in it.

2. Theſe are the noble Powers of the Rational Soul; and hence I argue, in the Second place, that this Excellence of it is a manifeſtation of the Exiſtence of a God; becauſe theſe high Endowments and Faculties could not be derived from the caſual Modifications of Dead and Senſeleſs Matter, but from the Agency of an intelligent Cauſe, that is eminently and abſolutely Perfect.

For it is a certain Principle of Reaſon, That there cannot be more in the Effect than there is in the Cauſe. If there could be more, it would follow that Something can come of it ſelf out of Nothing, which is impoſſible. Defect of Power in an Agent, is a Non-Entity, a want of Being, a Privation, an incapacity, an utter Nothing: Nor is it conceivable how any thing can be drawn into Exiſtence out of it, but by a ſuperiour, uncontroulable Power over it: For ſhould we ſuppoſe it to produce any thing of it ſelf, we ſhould ſuppoſe it to produce that which it hath not power to bring forth, and to give it a Being which it hath not at all it ſelf; that is, to bring it out of an Incapacity, or out of Nothing

thing: Which no Humane Reaſon can think how a thing can do by any Caſuality of its own, becauſe there is a defect of ſuch Caſuality. If then there be ſomething more and higher in a Rational Soul than what is in Matter, it muſt be inconſiſtent with Reaſon to imagine, that Matter cauſed it; for then it would neceſſarily follow, that it cauſed it without a Power, or by its Incapacity, Inability, and Defect; that is, out of Nothing. When we obſerve this admirable frame of Nature, the Univerſe, can we think that its Order was effectively cauſed by Confuſion? Its Harmony by Diſcord? Its Beauty by Diſproportions? the Uſefulneſs of its parts by Errour? Its wiſe and regular Fabrication by Nonſenſe? This were to make one Contrary the cauſe of another; and with parity of Reaſon it might be ſaid, that Water produceth Fire; and Darkneſs made the Sun; and that Death is the efficient Cauſe of Life, Senſe and Motion. In like manner, when we conſider the Nature and Faculties of the Rational Soul, and compare the whole frame of it with the Subſtance and Properties of dull, lifeleſs, and incogitative Mat-

ter, can we think that Corporiety was the cauſe of a thing that is immaterial? that Diviſibility was the cauſe of a Being immortal? that Reaſon was the work of Stupidity? that Atoms taught us to Philoſophize? that Wiſdom ſprang from the motion of little Bodies, void of all Art, Skill, and Knowledge? and that the Powers we find within us to act with Freedom and Choice; to direct our Actions by the Logick of Truth, and by the Laws of Vertue; to deſire and intend our Good in all things; to purſue it with Eagerneſs, Underſtanding, and Delight; and to rejoyce in the Fruition of it; can we think, I ſay, that all theſe things came from the Chance-Operations of Matter, which hath nothing of Senſe or Thought in it? It may as well be ſaid, that the tumbling of Stones and Timber together will produce Senſation, Intellection, Reaſoning, Memory, Prudence, Conſcience, together with thoſe Paſſions and Affections which we feel within us: In ſhort, It may be as well ſaid, that a Rational Soul can be educed and drawn out of an Heap of Rubbiſh. As an Effect cannot naturally proceed from a contrary Cauſe; ſo neither

neither can an Effect tranſcend the Perfection and Vertue of its natural Cauſe. It may fall ſhort of it; or it may come up to a degree of equality with it; but it can no more go beyond or above it, than Waters can naturally run higher than the Fountain-Head ſtands. So that were there nothing in the World beſides dead and ſenſeleſs Matter, modified into various Forms at a venture, by undeſigning and unintending Motion, it were impoſſible for a Rational Soul to ſpring out of it; for the Effect would be much nobler than the Cauſe, and conſequently would emerge out of nothing. For I ask; Were the Perfections of a Rational Soul in Matter before the Soul was made, or were they not? If you ſuppoſe they were, then this ridiculous Conceit will follow, that Atoms have in them Knowledge, Wiſdom, Morality, Liberty of Will, and ſuch other Perfections which belong unto the Soul. If they were not antecedently there, then this ridiculous Conceit will follow, That Perfections were cauſed by Incapacity; or that Matter gave a perfect Being an Exiſtence, which it ſelf had not to give: Which would be a plain Contradiction;

on; and would moreover aſcribe a creative Power to Matter (though it be a thing altogether Paſſive) when the Men I now diſpute againſt will not allow a Deity it ſelf that Power, becauſe they think it an impoſſibility. Hence a Learned Author concludes poſitively, that neither can Matter, (which is a meer Paſſive thing) efficiently produce a Soul, nor a Soul Matter; no finite imperfect Subſtance being able to produce another Subſtance out of nothing; much leſs can ſuch a Subſtance as hath a lower degree of Entity and Perfection in it, create that which hath an higher. There is a Scale or Ladder of Perfections in the Univerſe, one above another; and the Production of things cannot poſſibly be in way of Aſcent from lower to higher, but muſt of neceſſity be in way of Deſcent, from higher to lower. Now to produce any one higher Rank of Being from the lower, as Cogitation from Magnitude and Body, is plainly to invert this Order in the Scale of the Univerſe, from downwards to upwards; and by the ſame reaſon that one higher Rank or Degree in this Scale is thus unnaturally

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ly produced from a lower, may all the reſt be produced alſo.

The Conſequence of all this is, That Matter being ſo utterly uncapable of making an immaterial, immortal, intelligent Soul; there muſt be a moſt perfect Mind that gave it its Faculties and its Nature. Either it muſt be ſuppoſed to have no Cauſe at all, (which would be moſt abſurd to imagine) or it muſt have a competent Cauſe; or a higher and moſt perfect Being to derive its Exiſtence from. A ſpiritual Subſtance cannot come but from a Spirit; nor can any thing be the cauſe of Mind but Mind; or of Underſtanding but Underſtanding; or of Reaſon but Reaſon; nor of Self-activity and Liberty, but that which is a ſelf-active, voluntary and free Agent. Since the rational Soul is ſo excellent a Creature, there muſt be a moſt excellent Being that created it; a Being that contains all manner of Perfection; a Being of unlimited Power that could make it of Nothing, by the force and fecundity of his own Divine Will; and a Being of the moſt exalted and glorious Nature that could give Exiſtence to ſuch an admirable Being, as every humane Soul

Soul is; void of Matter and Corruption; uncapable Naturally of dying; in every reſpect like unto a Deity; Spiritual, Intelligent, Active, Wiſe, Powerful, Benign, Kind and Good.

But thoſe unreaſonable Men who deny the Exiſtence of God, finding themſelves preſt with the invincible force of this Argument, would ſhift it off by pretending that what we ſuppoſe touching the ſpiritual Nature and Faculties of Mens Souls, is not to be granted. They ſay that there is nothing real in the World but Matter and Motion: That our very Souls themſelves are Matter, conſiſting of a ſmoother and finer ſort of Atoms, or indiſcernible Motes; by the various Motions and Modifications whereof the Soul Thinks, Underſtands, Exerts the Will, and Acteth. They will have mind to be nothing but the local Motion of ſome more active Particles of Matter. They will have Knowledge to be nothing but a Paſſion cauſed by the intromitting of Images into the Brain, from ſenſible Objects without. They will have Memory to be nothing but the decaying remainder of Motion; like the ſound about a Bell when it has done ringing.

And

And every act and determination of the Will, they would have to be *Clinamen Principiorum*, or a declination of Atoms from a kind of perpendicular Line, in which they ſuppoſe them to have hung before: So that according to theſe Men, every Operation of the Soul lieth in Atoms, and is derived from Atoms; which Whimſies deſerve Laughter rather than any grave or ſober Confutation. For is it poſſible for Men of true, ſolid Reaſon to believe that Atoms can be a bubling Fountain of Thoughts? That they can ſtudy, contemplate, perceive, argue, form Opinions, reſolve Doubts, diſcover Truth, find out the different Natures of Good and Evil, direct our Actions, tell us what we muſt Do, and what we muſt Avoid, promiſe Rewards, or threaten us with Puniſhment? Nay inflict Puniſhment preſently, and plague wicked People with the intolerable Smart that attends an evil Conſcience? They may as well ſay that Atoms can write Books; that the whole material World is an Academy of all manner of Learning; and that the Motes which we ſee dancing in the Sun-beams, are ſo many Hiſtorians, Orators, Philoſophers

phers and Divines. The truth is, 'Tis not Reaſon that is the Ground-work of theſe wild Conceits, but a ſad Neceſſity they bring upon themſelves of running to the moſt monſtrous Abſurdities, to avoid all Thoughts of a God, whoſe Exiſtence they have diſowned. For if there be ſuch a thing as a rational Soul diſtinct from Matter and Body, it muſt inevitably follow that there is alſo a Deity who gave it its Being, becauſe nothing but a Deity could give it. Therefore they who have the Front to deny the Being of a Deity, are forced to deny the immateriality of the Soul of courſe. And yet that the Soul is immaterial, its excellent Powers, Faculties and Operations will convince any one, that will but lay his Hand upon his Heart, and give himſelf leave to think ſoberly. For if the Soul be Matter, How came Men to diſpute about its Immateriality? How had the Mind any Notion of it? How did the Mind get it at firſt, ſince it is infinitely too high for Matter? Nay, ſince the Notion of Incorporiety is ſo contrary and repugnant to the Nature and Notion of Matter: If the Soul be Matter, How comes it to judge of material

terial Representations, and to discover those Impostures and Cheats, which Matter many times puts upon the Imagination? As for instance, The Sun is found to be vastly bigger than the whole Earth, though it appears to the Eye and Fansie to be but a Foot wide. There are a thousand other Errors wherewith our Senses and Imaginations are apt to be deluded: And how could the Mind look through all those Errors into the Truth and Reality of things, if it were not a nobler Being than Matter that measures sensible Objects by intelligible Ideas of its own, which are the proper Criterions of Truth? If the Soul were Matter, How could it be capable of Reflecting within it self? Or how could it Recollect so many things done long ago, in the Days of ones Minority, and Recover so many fugitive Ideas, as we find it doth Command; and this by a native Power of its own, purely by the strength of thinking? Matter cannot act upon Matter, but by some impulse from without it; much less can it act upon it self, as the Soul does, by a peculiar Faculty it has of casting about, and of rouling Thoughts within the Minds; and therefore

fore it muſt be a noble Being diſtinct from Matter that hath a Principle of Activity, and an Empire within it ſelf. If it were Matter, How could it command the Body in every Inſtance, and make it obey at Pleaſure? Nay, how could it command it ſelf to think on this Subject, or that, as it liſteth? To go on a Meditating, or give it over? To reſolve upon that Action, or another, without controul? How could it forſee, deliberate, or adviſe? How could it entertain any inward Pleaſures and Joys; impreſſions which Matter can no more receive than Rocks can dance? How could it contemplate ſo excellent a Being as a Deity? Or diſcourſe of Eternity and another World? Or poſſeſs wicked Wretches with ſuch Fears as they can never quite rid their Mind of? Or fill good Men with comfortable Hopes of a Reward? The natures of Good and Evil, and the Ideas of Divine Juſtice and Benignity, are too Sublime to fall under Senſe, nor can they be incident to Matter; and he muſt have the moſt ridiculous Conceptions in the World of his own Frame, who thinks that the Operations and Perfections of his Soul are no higher or better

better than what Clay, or Pebbles, or Chips would be capable of, were their Particles but otherwiſe modified.

Hence we infer, That the rational Soul is of far higher Extraction than what Stone or Timber can pretend to: That it is infinitely of a more noble Nature than Atoms of Duſt: And that its Operations and Perfections are vaſtly different from the Properties of Matter, how fine ſoever you ſuppoſe it to be. And therefore it will follow, either that theſe Operations and Perfections ſprang from Nothing; or that there is a Being of the moſt eminent and abſolute Perfections, from whom they are derived; which indeed is the only true and ſatisfactory Account that can be given of the Nature and Faculties of a rational Soul.

I have hitherto argued from Reaſon only; becauſe they who deny the Exiſtence of a Deity, are conſtrained by neceſſary Conſequence to deny Divine Revelation too, and the Authority of the Holy Scriptures. However we may *ex abundanti* obſerve, what *Moſes* tells us, *Gen.* 1. 27. *God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him:* And what St. *Paul* tells

us, 1 *Cor.* 11. 7. *That a man is the image and glory of God.* Which places of Scripture, though they are to be underſtood partly of that Dominion, Authority and Power, which God hath given Man as his Vicegerent and Repreſentative over all things here below; yet do they, I conceive, ſpeak alſo, and perhaps chiefly of that Similitude and Reſemblance, which the Soul of every one of us, does, in its Frame, bear of the Divine Nature and Perfections; which will a little further ſhew its Excellence, and conſequently the Exiſtence of a ſuper-eminent Being, whoſe Stamp and Impreſs it carries as far as the Capacities of a Creature can admit it.

We find how volatile and nimble our Thoughts are, how ſoon they reach the very ends of the Earth; how quickly they compaſs Sea and Land; with what Facility they mount to Heaven; how ſpeedily they take a view of the whole Frame of Nature, as it were at once; and with what Celerity the Mind does gather and comprehend within it ſelf ſo many different Ideas. And what is this but an imperfect Repreſentation of the Omnipreſence of that

that God, *Who is ſaid to fill heaven and earth? Jer.* 23. 24. Nay, *Whom the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain? 1 King.* 8. 27.

We find alſo, That notwithſtanding this Divine Activity of the Mind, and its Ubiquitary Rangings abroad, we can command it home, and make it retire into a delightful Solitude, to view thoſe entertaining Ideas within it ſelf; and we do often fix it ſo, that outward Objects cannot draw it off from the inward Operations it is intent upon, nor deprive it of the great Pleaſures of Contemplation, and of Enjoying its own private Thoughts. And what is this but a faint Similitude of the All-ſufficiency and Plenitude of a God, who ſtandeth not in need of any things without himſelf, but is infinitely Bleſſed in the Contemplation of the Glories of his own Nature, and in the eternal Fruition of his own unſpeakable Perfections.

We find too, That though we know but in part, yet we can not only obſerve things preſent and before us, but can moreover call back things paſt and gone, and foreſee Events that are Future or Poſſible; and can repreſent

them all to our Minds, as if they were all now under our Eye. And what is this, but an umbratile ſhew of the Omniſcience of a God, whoſe Underſtanding is infinite, *Pſal.* 47. 5. And before whom Hell and Deſtruction, and all the Hearts of the Children of Men are? *Prov.* 15.

We find again, That there is in the Mind of Man a wonderful Fecundity of Power, to do almoſt any thing which is Neceſſary, Good, Honourable and Excellent: To form Notions, as it were, out of Nothing, and out of thoſe Notions, which comparatively ſeem next to Nothing, to draw by the gradual Methods of Study and Conſideration, Syſtems of Philoſophy, Platforms of Politicks, Schemes and Models of Arts, Volumes of Divinity; and whatever is uſeful or tendeth to improve the Knowledge, and to anſwer the Wants of Mankind. And what is this, but a weak Reſemblance of the Omnipotence of that God, who by the infinite Fecundity of his Divine Power created all Things out of Nothing; *Who ſpake and they were done, who commanded and they ſtood faſt?* Pſ. 33. 9.

We

We find moreover in the Mind of Man a conſtant Diſpoſition to do every thing for the ſake of ſome Good, either real, or at leaſt apparent; and accordingly to deliberate about the Choice of neceſſary and proper Means. And what is this but a little Signature of God's Wiſdom, *Who worketh all things according to the counſel of his own will*, Epheſ 1. 11. *And maketh every thing to work together for the good of them that love him*, Rom. 8. 28.

We find furthermore in the Mind of Man innate Principles of Righteouſneſs and Benignity; which no tract of Time, no Humours or Arts of People can totally obliterate, though the baſe Inclinations, and ſelfiſh Practices of ſome have ſtrangely defaced them; for even Publicans and Sinners will do good to them, at whoſe Hands they have received good. And what is this but ſome Similitude of a God, who is Righteous in all his Ways; and whoſe Mercy is over all his Works; though it cometh vaſtly ſhort of that Pattern which the Son of God gave the World from his Father, *Who cauſeth his ſun to ſhine upon the evil as well as upon the*

good, and ſends his rain upon the juſt and unjuſt alſo, Matth. 5. 45.

Some more Inſtances and Reſpects there are, wherein the Soul of Man does in ſome (though very ſcanty) meaſure reſemble a Being that is eminently and abſolutely Perfect. But theſe being added to the other Conſiderations, touching the immateriality and immortality of its Nature, and the excellence of its Faculties and Powers, are enough to make it appear to all reaſonable Men, that there is verily a God above, after whoſe Image and Likeneſs the rational Soul is created. And this I have uſed as the laſt Argument to prove the Exiſtence of a Deity, becauſe it cometh ſo home and cloſe that no Man can renounce a God, but by renouncing his own humane Nature, and by making himſelf like unto the very Beaſts that periſh, and are without underſtanding.

I have now, I thank God, gone through with what brevity I could all thoſe things which I propoſed at my firſt entrance upon this Subject, to confirm you in the rational belief of the true

true and ever bleſſed God, in an Age which ſo aboundeth with Infidelity. Conſidering how Men on that ſide are wont to ſay, that we can have no Idea of God, becauſe a Deity is ſuppoſed to be incorporeal, not ſubject to Senſe; and ſo that a Deity is an unconceivable Nothing; therefore I did think it neceſſary in the firſt place to ſhew what the Notion of God meaneth; namely a Being of eminent and abſolute Perfections. Out of which general Deſcription there follows, by neceſſary Conſequence, a more particular account of thoſe Perfections which relate, either to the Nature of God, as Independency, Incorporeity, Eternity, *&c.* or as to God's Actions, as perfect Knowledge, Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, and the like. Then having ſhewed how Intelligible and Rational this Notion of God is, though it be not any ſenſible Idea, as thoſe are which come from corporeal Objects without us, I proceeded, in the next place, to prove there actually is ſuch a perfect Being. 1. From the order of Cauſes, which obligeth us to acknowledge that there muſt be one firſt Cauſe, Self-exiſtent and Eternal; or a Being not made by

any other, and the like. 2. From the general conſent of Mankind, which cannot rationally be aſcribed to any but that firſt Cauſe, who is the common Author of humane Nature. 3. From ſome extraordinary Occurrences, which plainly ſhew that there is a ſupreme Being of the moſt perfect Knowledge and Power. 4. From the Frame and State of the World, which is ſo admirable for its Order, for its Beauty, for the uſefulneſs of its Parts, for the reſemblances of Wiſdom in Creatures which are Irrational, and for the ample Proviſion that is made for the good of all Things, that it would be the moſt ſenſeleſs imagination to attribute this goodly Frame of Nature to Matter and Motion, to blind Fortune and Chance, or to any other Cauſe, but that Almighty, All-wiſe, and moſt benign Being whoſe Perfections are infinite. And, 5. To evince this further yet, I have taken particular notice of the admirable Frame of the rational Soul, which in its Nature, Faculties and manner of Operating, bears an evident Reſemblance and Repreſentation of a Deity.

This

This whole Speculation being thus ended, I ſhould now, in the laſt place, draw it down to our Practice, and ſhew what we are to render unto God for all theſe bright Manifeſtations of his Divine Glory; what juſt Acknowledgments they call for at our hands; what Acts of Faith and Admiration, of Humility and Holineſs; of Adoration and Praiſe, of Love and Obedience, and Imitation, and the like Expreſſions of Religion, are due from us. But this Subject is ſo copious, as well as of ſuch great importance, that it ought to be handled diſtinctly, and with Care, and therefore requires a Diſcourſe by it ſelf. At preſent I ſhall conclude with a devout Hymn out of the Writings of the Holy Pſalmiſt, who conſidering the tranſcendent Greatneſs of God's Majeſty, the Glory of his Nature, the Variety of his Works, and his ſtupendious Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs throughout all, ſummon'd the whole World to join with him in the Adoration of their great and only Creator.

O praiſe the Lord of heaven: praiſe him in the height.

Praiſe him all ye angels of his: praiſe him all his hoſt.

Praiſe him ſun and moon: praiſe him all ye ſtars and light.

Praiſe him all ye heavens: and ye water that are above the heavens.

Let them praiſe the name of the Lord, for he ſpake the word and they were made, he commanded and they were created.

He hath made them faſt for ever and ever: he hath given them a law which ſhall not be broken.

Praiſe the Lord upon earth, ye dragons and all deeps.

Fire and hail, ſnow and vapours, wind and ſtorm, fulfilling his word.

Mountains and all hills: fruitful trees and all cedars.

Beaſts and all cattel: worms and feathered fowls.

Kings of the earth and all people: princes and all judges of the world.

Young men and maidens, old men and children; praiſe the name of the Lord: for his name only is excellent, and his praiſe above heaven and earth, Pſalm, 148.

O ſpeak good of the Lord all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion. Praiſe thou the Lord, O my ſoul, Pſalm 103. 22.

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